

LinkedIn best practice guidelines



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LinkedIn best practice guidelines

LinkedIn is a key resource for shaping professional reputation, boosting visibility, networking, and staying current with the most recent market trends and job opportunities. It should not be just a copy of your CV. While both convey your expertise and value proposition, your LinkedIn profile is aimed at creating online presence and networking. It should be more informal, written in first person, and give a broad view of your knowledge and personality, instead of being a deeper job/skill-focused CV.

How you appear online

Most recruiters will search for candidates using a mix of keywords (e.g., skills, company name, industry, title) and get a set of results (see example below). Most of this information is automatically pulled from your profile, but you have the ability to edit your photo and the headline.



Name Name • 2nd

Chief Executive Officer at Company A

Atlanta, GA

Past: **CEO** at Company B

 Name1 and Name2 are mutual connections

Connect

→ Name, Connection level (1st, 2nd or 3rd)

→ Headline (current role by default)

→ Location

→ Where the search word first appears

→ Shared connections

LinkedIn search engine optimization

It is important to be well-connected and include relevant keywords early in your profile to rank higher in LinkedIn’s search results. You can optimize your ‘Headline’, the ‘About’ section, and ‘Experience’ with keywords related to your industry, profession, and skills. Your goal is to create a compelling snapshot that distinguishes you from your peers and entices recruiters to click and view your full profile, where you can provide a comprehensive overview of your professional background..



Name Name • 3rd+

CEO/ P&L Owner/Growth leader | Retail...

Altanta Metropolitan Area

Current **CEO**/President at Company xyz **Atlanta**

[Message](#)



Name Name • 3rd+

CEO at Company XYZ

Altanta Metropolitan Area

Current **CEO**/CFO at Company xyz Inc **Atlanta**

[Message](#)

Photo

According to LinkedIn, profiles with a picture are 14 times more likely to be viewed than those without one.

- Your photo should look professional and friendly. Take a photo in what you would normally wear to work, such as business or business casual attire, depending on your industry.
- Solid colors work best, your face should take about 60% of the frame.
- You can also include a background banner – use stock photo to showcase your personality, hobbies etc.

Headline: Position yourself

The headline appears below your name and allows you to quickly position yourself to viewers. The default setting is to list your current role, but this can be edited to reflect your value proposition, achievements, and interests.

- You have up to 220 characters to customize this space and can use the divider symbol (“|”) to separate phrases
- Include the title you are looking for, and the industrial, functional, or geographical expertise that you feel is important (a few examples below).
- If you are not currently working, do not put “looking for a new challenge/in transition” in your headline. You can identify your interest in new roles through the ‘Open to work’ functionality, so it is best to use the headline to highlight your achievements.

Headline example 1

CEO | P&L Owner | Turnaround & Growth leader | Digital transformation | Retail

Headline example 2

CFO | Board Member & Advisor | Strategic Planning & Execution | Mergers & Acquisitions | EBITDA Growth | Banking

Headline example 3

VP Engineering | Product Management | Data & AI | SaaS | Java | Python | C++ | MIT

- 2. **Key accomplishments.** Include notable achievements and projects: Highlight any significant accomplishments, projects, or milestones that demonstrate your expertise and success. This adds credibility to your profile and showcases your ability to deliver results.
- 3. **Areas of expertise.** Highlight your skills and experience: Outline your key skills, experiences, and accomplishments relevant to your career. Focus on your unique selling points and what sets you apart from others in your field. Use bullet points or short paragraphs to keep the information easy to read.

- Use a first-person narrative instead of the third-person used in a CV.
- Identify the challenges a potential employer might be facing and position yourself as an expert who can help.

[Example 1 – General leadership background](#)

[Example 2 – VC / Entrepreneurial background](#)

[Example 3 – Tech background](#)

[Example 4 – Consulting background](#)

About: The most important part of your profile

Like an executive summary on a resume, this section is a description of your profile and the value you will bring to the organization. Think of it as an ‘elevator pitch’ that a recruiter would use to describe you to the hiring manager. You can find a few examples in the [Appendix](#).

- You have up to 2,600 characters (~500 words), consider breaking it into 3 sections:
 - 1. **Strong opening statement.** A pithy paragraph that summarizes your professional value proposition. Clearly state what you do, your expertise, and the value you bring to the table.

Activity: Your posts and comments

This section shows if you have shared or commented recently on any LinkedIn posts. LinkedIn populates this section automatically and most people will skip it when reviewing your profile.

Featured: Showcase your distinctiveness

If you are actively posting on LinkedIn, we recommend enabling ‘Featured’; [here’s](#) a quick guide. In this section, you can include your LinkedIn posts and articles that you think showcase your distinctiveness the most.

- Sharing articles, updates, and insights positions you as a thought leader and can increase profile views.
- Make sure these publications are recent and relevant to your field.
- Be prepared to talk about these publications during the interview process.

Experience: Outline your career path and accomplishments

The ‘Experience’ section allows you to outline your career path and highlight a few key accomplishments in each role. It should not have the same level of information as a resume. Instead, provide enough information so that someone reading your profile can get a sense of the size and scope of your work before connecting with you to learn more.

- Make sure that your companies, titles, and date ranges match the ones in your resume.
- Briefly describe the scope of your recent roles. For the roles that were 15+ years ago you can just provide dates, companies, and titles.

- Make sure that you are not sharing any confidential information. When describing consulting experience, you can highlight your focus and a few studies, but make sure that a third party would not be able to identify the names of the clients you served
- If you have recently transitioned out of your previous role, it is customary to not include an end date. You can share that you are between roles when you start to interview to avoid the potential bias against people in transition. At the same time, there’s nothing wrong with closing off your last job and adding an ‘Independent Consultant’ title as a “placeholder” with a few bullet points describing your advisory work.
- Don’t post your full resume. You don’t want anyone to download it and share it without permission, especially if you are conducting a confidential job search.

Board roles: Highlight the most relevant

We recommend highlighting your experience most relevant to the role you are seeking first. If you are seeking a full-time role, consider moving your board activity to the bottom of your ‘About’ section or grouping them under one experience entry. If you’re building a portfolio career, then listing board memberships as separate experience entries is a good way to go. When describing your board experience, don’t forget to mention any committees that you sit on.

Skills & Endorsements: List some keywords

In this section, you can identify your skills and other people can provide feedback by endorsing you for specific skills. Don’t worry about getting endorsements as viewers almost never pay attention to this. Instead, use this section as a list of keywords that you want recruiters to identify you with. Most skills are very broad (e.g., leadership), but some might be more specific to your role, industry or function and can be important to include.

Recommendations: Protect client confidentiality

Connections can provide feedback on their experience working with you and you can provide feedback to others.

- This section was more popular in the early days of LinkedIn, so most people do not pay much attention to this section.
- Make sure that any recommendations would not allow a third party to determine past clients or studies.

Creator mode: Expand your influence

You can turn on the ‘Creator’ mode to expand your reach and influence on LinkedIn using [this link](#). As a LinkedIn Creator, you can share the list of topics (#hashtags) you post about the most right below your headline at the top of your profile (this will also appear in the search results). This will make it easier for other LinkedIn members to discover your content and follow you.



Name Name

3rd+

Follow

CEO/P&L Owner/Growth leader | Retail...

Altanta Metropolitan Area

Talks about #Retail #AI #Digital #Sustainability

Current **CEO**/President at Company xyz **Atlanta**

13K followers

Additional sections: Highlight additional activities and accomplishments

LinkedIn allows you to include additional sections to highlight language skills, volunteer commitments, and patents, among other accomplishments, by clicking ‘Add profile section’ from your profile page. Use these sections as needed to bring additional color to your leadership, technical or global experience, but ensure that what you include is relevant.



Other LinkedIn tips & tricks

Connections

Ideally, you should have a minimum of 500 connections and should strive for more. Increasing your connections on LinkedIn can help improve where you appear in search results and can be a good starting point for a conversation if you have mutual connections with an interviewer. You can review incoming invitations to connect along with suggested people that you might know [here](#). When sending invitations make sure to include a note outlining why you want to connect – people are most likely to respond to a personalized invite.

Setting up ‘open to work’

You can indicate that you are open to new opportunities with specific job titles and locations [here](#), which will increase the likelihood that recruiters will contact you. LinkedIn will automatically hide this from all your current company members, and you can manage who sees this:

- **All LinkedIn members** – we don’t recommend this option as it will automatically add a green ‘open to work’ frame to your photo.
- **Recruiters only** – this way it will be visible only to users who have a paid LinkedIn Recruiter account.

Open to work
Consultant and General Management roles
[Show details](#)



Engagement

To make yourself more visible you might consider posting articles and liking/commenting on the posts of others in your [feed](#). Be mindful of how you are adding to the discussion and avoid being negative when interacting with others. Not everyone likes social networking – and it would look odd to suddenly start posting every day. Use LinkedIn as you feel comfortable, generously sharing other people’s posts and adding value by commenting. If you would like to share an article or post something, a good rule of thumb is: Can I think of 2-3 people in my network who would get something from this post? If you can’t then the post is probably too self-promotional and you shouldn’t share it. If you are conducting a confidential search, a good way to use LinkedIn is by sharing articles related to your company and role. This way, you can promote your company while raising visibility of your profile.

URL Setting

You can create your personalized LinkedIn URL by following [these](#) steps.

Hiding your connections

Sometimes when your job search is confidential it’s best to hide the list of your connections from other LinkedIn members using [this](#) guide, but please note that mutual connections will still be visible.

Public visibility settings

You can control your profile’s appearance for people who are not signed into LinkedIn [here](#).

Stop sharing profile updates with your network

We suggest turning this off [here](#) prior to making lots of changes to your LinkedIn profile – but then turn it back on again when you start networking and interacting with other people.



Difference between free LinkedIn and Premium LinkedIn accounts

Main differences are outlined [here](#). We recommend sticking with the free LinkedIn account – it should be enough for your job search unless you’ve reached the monthly limit for free profile searches.

Searching for specific company/school alums

You can easily search for a specific company/school alumni [here](#) using ‘All filters’ and specifying ‘Past company’ or/and ‘School’ along with other useful filters like, for example, ‘Locations’.

Changing how others see that you visited their profile

You can select what others see when you’ve viewed their profile [here](#).

LinkedIn Jobs

Monitoring LinkedIn’s job page can be a useful way of seeing what is going on in the market – who is hiring, and what employers are looking for. You can also apply for roles there directly but do bear in mind that these roles might have been already filled/gone on hold without updating the job posting. The best practice is to find somebody you know at the company and try to have a quick chat with them to learn more about the role – they may be able to introduce you to the hiring manager.

Engage in groups

Join LinkedIn groups related to your industry or interests. Participate in discussions, share insights, and connect with fellow group members.

Update your profile regularly

Keep your profile up to date with your latest experiences, skills, and accomplishments - an active profile is more likely to be noticed.



Example 1

General leadership background

With a rich background spanning two decades in financial leadership roles across diverse industries, I am deeply passionate about optimizing financial structures to fuel sustainable growth. My focus centers on delivering tangible value through strategic financial management, risk mitigation, and capital allocation. I’m driven by the thrill of navigating complex financial landscapes and turning challenges into opportunities. As a continuous learner, I aspire to elevate financial practices, foster innovation, and contribute to creating a lasting economic impact. In my journey, I take pride in:

- Orchestrating a successful \$150M capital restructuring, reducing debt by 30%, and enhancing liquidity during a critical market downturn.
- Leading a cross-functional team to streamline operational processes, resulting in a 20% reduction in costs while maintaining quality standards.
- Driving a robust risk management strategy that safeguarded the organization’s assets during a volatile market phase, preventing potential losses of over \$50M.

Beyond financial pursuits, I find solace in exploring the world through photography and am an avid supporter of local art communities. I also enjoy mentoring aspiring finance professionals, channeling my passion for lifelong learning and knowledge-sharing. Connect with me to discuss innovative financial strategies, strategic partnerships, and how we can drive impactful financial outcomes together. I will be particularly excited to chat about:

- Financial Strategy & Planning
- Risk Management & Mitigation
- Capital Allocation & Investment
- Financial Modeling & Analysis
- Team Leadership & Collaboration

Example 2

VC / Entrepreneurial background

I am an experienced entrepreneur with a track record of success in the digital realm. I have led numerous successful internet and mobile companies in the United States and have also assisted clients and individuals in building, expanding, and transforming businesses to achieve growth. My primary passion and mission revolve around helping executives and their teams excel and thrive, emphasizing long-term sustainable happiness and fulfillment on personal, family, and professional fronts.

As an operator, investor, and coach, I have found that building and expanding new businesses is the most effective way for me to accomplish these goals. I pay special attention to identifying and optimizing business models, as well as establishing optimal organizational and governance structures for leaders, teams, and ecosystems.

Currently, I provide coaching to executives and offer advisory services to clients looking to create and grow successful digital businesses, including platforms, ecosystems, e-commerce ventures, marketplaces, and SaaS solutions.

Key achievements:

- Established and expanded the operation at [Company A], securing the world’s leading position as a mobile content provider with millions of users and over \$350 million in revenue. Notably, multiple global bestseller games were launched during my tenure.
- As CEO at a leading online marketplace, I spearheaded a transformation from a transaction-based anonymous reverse auction platform to a subscription-based, reputable open marketplace with verified users. Within one year, sales experienced a three-fold increase..

Example 3

Tech background

Leadership spike

With fifteen years of experience in the financial sector, tech and telecom, I specialize in merging business and technology expertise to unlock opportunities in Data & AI.

I currently serve as the Head of Data & AI at [Company X], one of the world’s leading telecom companies. In my role as Managing Director at [Company Y], I achieved a remarkable fivefold increase in revenue, focusing on AI enterprise solutions for advertising, credit risk, and customer insights. I’ve also led significant digital & AI transformations at [Company C] and [Company D].

My skills include building and guiding cross-functional teams of data experts, product specialists, and digital professionals. I possess an entrepreneurial mindset, enabling me to successfully launch new markets and drive sales of data-driven products. I am a Business Angel, a [University X][alumnus/a], and a certified AI professional.

Notable achievements include:

- Directing a data analytics enterprise with 100 employees, achieving a remarkable fivefold sales growth, increasing revenue from \$1.2 million in 2021 to \$7.8 million in 2022.
- Developing a credit-scoring product line and conducting technical validations with leading financial institutions.

- Orchestrating the digital transformation in a telecom conglomerate, resulting in a substantial impact of 7% of EBITDA.
- Holding official membership and contributing to [Council A] and serving as an Advisory Board member at [Company B].
- Being honored as one of the 2021 Global Elite Innovators in the field of Data Science and Analytics.

Key skills include:

- Data & AI
- Cybersecurity
- IoT and Emerging Technologies
- Business Intelligence
- Digital Strategy & Transformation
- E-commerce & Digital Marketing

Example 3 (continued)

Technology spike

I am a highly skilled tech professional with over 12 years of experience in engineering and product management. I possess a proven track record of successfully delivering products and am deeply passionate about leveraging technology to solve real-world problems.

My engineering background has granted me a profound understanding of the technical aspects of product development. I am proficient in programming languages such as Java, Python, and C++. In addition to my engineering expertise, I have cultivated robust product management skills, encompassing product strategy, market research, and product road-mapping. I have led product teams from ideation to launch and have extensive experience collaborating with cross-functional teams to ensure successful product introductions.

Throughout my career, I have honed strong leadership and communication skills. I excel in team management, goal setting, and providing guidance and support to team members. I can effectively articulate complex technical concepts to both technical and non-technical stakeholders.

Above all, my passion lies in innovation and utilizing technology to address real-world challenges. I continually seek new and creative approaches to problem-solving and remain committed to staying updated with the latest industry trends and technologies.

Example 4

Consulting background

With over a decade of extensive experience in management consulting, specializing in Healthcare Tech, my expertise includes spearheading growth initiatives, optimizing operations, driving digital and analytics transformations, managing mergers and acquisitions, conducting due diligence, and overseeing product management throughout the healthcare value chain. I am a change catalyst with a strong commitment to effecting significant and enduring change, particularly in complex and competitive organizational environments. I am devoted to enhancing the experiences of consumers, patients, and employees while fostering business innovation and enabling advancements in digital and analytics.

