

How to Optimize Your LinkedIn Profile to Support Your Career Goals

Almost 95% of recruiters use LinkedIn to search for candidates, but most job seekers are overlooking this valuable opportunity.

If you're like many professionals, you probably created a profile and occasionally go back to add more connections. However, there is so much more you can do with this platform to advance your career.

Take charge of your future and attract more attention from potential employers through learning how to optimize your LinkedIn profile to support your career goals. Try these tips for designing and using your LinkedIn profile.

Designing your LinkedIn Profile:

1. **Edit your headline.** Start by writing a specific headline. Tell employers what value you add and make them want to learn more. Keep your audience in mind and avoid technical terms that may be unfamiliar to them.
2. **Update your summary.** Your summary is where you can add more details and showcase your achievements. Provide statistics to describe your impact. **Add multimedia attachments like videos and work samples to help you stand out.**
3. **Choose your photo.** Pick an image that looks professional and clear. Focus on your face and use flattering natural light.
4. **Add keywords.** Help recruiters and automated search tools to find you. Browse through job descriptions and resumes for keywords that are popular in your field and include them in your profile, including the headline and summary.
5. **Choose your URL.** LinkedIn gives your profile a URL, but you can change it to something that you like better or might work more effectively for you. If your name is already taken, use a slight variation with your middle initial or hometown.
6. **Welcome recruiters.** Is your profile visible to recruiters? Go into your privacy settings to be sure that you've opted to let them know that you want to hear from them. **You'll need to reset this switch every few months if you're still looking.**
7. **Be consistent.** Your resume is usually written for a specific opening while your profile is a more general statement. Still, you want them to be similar enough to avoid causing any confusion.

8. **Check the meter.** LinkedIn provides a profile strength meter to help you rate yourself. It will give you helpful recommendations about additional steps you can take, such as adding more information about volunteer work and foreign languages.

Using your LinkedIn Profile:

1. **Gather recommendations and endorsements.** Recruiters want to know what others say about you. Ask former employers and other contacts for recommendations. Use your endorsements to advertise skills that are in high demand. If you're generous about helping others, they'll be more likely to return the favor.
2. **Write and publish.** Share your knowledge and insights on the LinkedIn publishing platform. **Develop a content strategy** and use a calendar that will remind you to publish regularly.
3. **Join groups.** Look for groups in your subject area and participate actively. Post articles and answer questions. **Avoid any temptation to over-promote yourself.**
4. **Monitor your connections.** Stay on the lookout for valuable connections to add to your network. Send them personal invitations that will make a positive impression.
5. **Encourage others.** Think of LinkedIn as a community where you can exchange ideas and support. Comment on posts from other users and share them with your own connections.
6. **Be discreet.** While you're working to raise your visibility, keep in mind that there may be times when you want to keep your job-hunting activities off view from your current boss and HR department. Change your privacy settings so you can control what information you want to make public.

Optimizing your LinkedIn profile can make it easier for others to find you and help you reach your professional goals. You'll increase your job satisfaction, and you'll probably spend less time on the unemployment line.