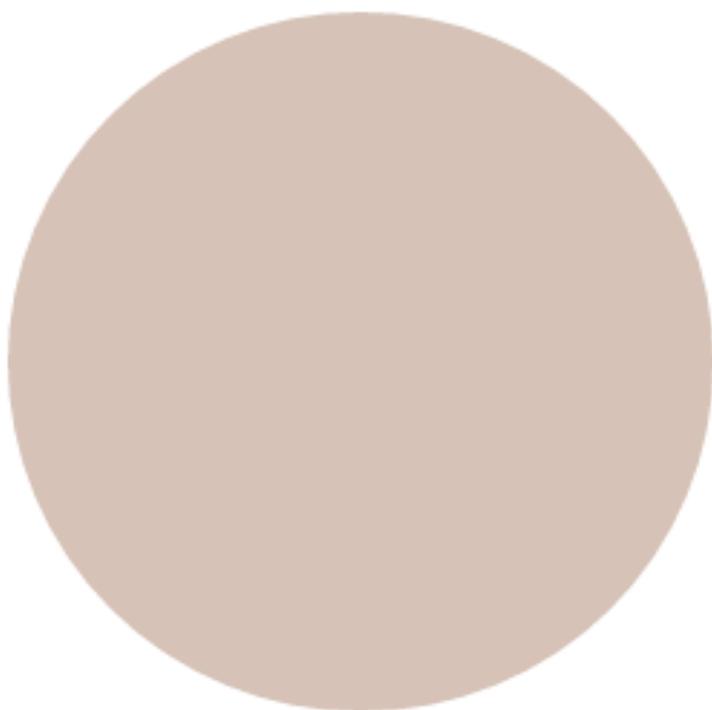


**LINKEDIN 101:  
HOW TO CREATE  
YOUR PROFILE**

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## LINKEDIN 101: HOW TO CREATE YOUR PROFILE

87% of recruiters say they use LinkedIn to find and vet candidates - and 36% have declined to interview a candidate, or rejected an application after looking at their social media profile and posts. So if your profile isn't spot on, you may not get very far with your job search.

Follow these steps to create a LinkedIn profile that makes others want to get to know you and maximises your chances of being seen by recruiters.

### 1. Get prepared

Before you log on to LinkedIn, collect:

- Any current versions of your bio you have.
- Your CV with your employment history.

- A high-quality professional photo (if you don't have one, I'd highly recommend you getting one).

Then create these two lists:

- The 10 skills you want to be known for (include a good combination of hard skills, such as data analysis, and soft skills, such as relationship building).
- Keywords for which you want to be known. These are the words recruiters and other people would use in searching to find you. These keywords may be the same/similar to those in the list above or they could be additional words.

Consider what words and phrases might people in your target market use to search for someone with your background, experience, and service offering. For help, check out a handful of job descriptions and the Careers page of some potential employers you are interested in, and pick common keywords around that job or industry.

## 2. Claim your URL

Just below your photo and headline is your profile's URL. You can customise it by following [these steps](#). A customised URL will increase your search results, make it easier to direct people to your profile (especially a bonus if you have a common name!), and it'll look sharp in email signatures and on business cards.

## 3. Create your profile content

Next, create your profile content. Here are the most important elements to work on:

### 1) Your Photo

Your photo is the first impression that you are putting forward, so it is important that it is professional.

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In addition, adding a photo makes you 11 times more likely to be found by hiring managers and recruiters.

Choose a simple, clear headshot where you are looking straight ahead. No selfies! It is well worth the money to have professional head shots taken, but that doesn't mean it has to be boring or artificial. Your photo should reflect you and your business personality. You don't need to wear business attire if that's not your style, but you do need to look professional and approachable. Smile and look pleasant to portray an impression of dependability and trustworthiness.

The old adage is true. People remember faces more than names. This is also why one needs to see your face and not some other part of you. For example, a yoga instructor should still use a headshot and not a photo of her/himself in a yoga pose. Photos that attest to skill or talent can be uploaded elsewhere on your profile, along with training videos and presentation materials.

BONUS TIP: In addition to your profile photo, add a background photo. It's a nice touch to improve your look, and it can help you weave a consistent story.

### 2) Your Headline

You have 120 characters at the top of your profile to describe to the world what you do. Many people just put their official job title, which is one option, but why not think outside the square? Choose descriptive and compelling keywords that a) make you as compelling and marketable as possible, and b) help you get found by the right people. Remember, LinkedIn is a search engine.

Examples of effective headlines include "Experienced Writer Creating Content for Fortune 500 Companies" and "Marketing Associate | Content Strategist | Copywriter | I help companies build brands, engage audiences & drive revenue".

Make it memorable, but keep it reflective of what it is you do.

### 3) Your Summary

It is well worth putting in the effort to write a unique and captivating summary section. Some recruiters are moving so quickly through profiles that, if you fail to grab their eyeballs with a solid summary, they're not reading further. It is all about making yourself stand out from the crowd, and introducing you as a talented [insert job you want next]. Do something interesting rather than the expected. Include high-resolution photos, an infographic of your experience, or a video of a talk you gave for example.

Think of your Summary as your "60-second commercial" or your "elevator speech." These are the first sentences people read, and you have a very short time to grab the reader's attention and make them want to read more.

There are several ways to write a good Summary. It could be a copy/paste of your CV's summary section. Or it could read more like your bio. You could take a core competencies approach and list the three or four key skills you bring to the table. You could take an accomplishments approach and list the three or four big results you have achieved on behalf of your past employers or clients. Or you could get quite creative and pair an interesting story with a section called "what you won't find on my CV." How far you can go in terms of creativity depends to some extent on your industry, as some are more traditional than others.

In any event, at the end of this section, the reader must have a strong idea of who you are and how you help people. End with a Call to Action (CTA) — for example, "Please reach out to discuss opportunities in X, Y, and Z."

### 4) Your Experience

Here include your current position and at least two other positions. Think about what you've achieved, delivered, and learned in each of your positions. Include distinct measurables and quantify whenever possible. Share details of interesting projects and key accomplishments.

And don't forget to illustrate your unique professional story and achievements by adding visuals. Including pictures, compelling videos, links to news stories, press releases, and innovative presentations you've delivered will bring your experiences to life.

### 5) Recommendations

This is one area not to be neglected as it is a valuable tool to build your credibility in the job marketplace.

Be proactive about asking for recommendations, as well as following up to keep on top of them. Recommendations can be from anyone: bosses, colleagues, mentors and mentees, happy clients, or anyone who has collaborated with you and benefited from your skills or advice.

A well-crafted recommendation that is genuinely glowing from a peer is better than a few generic sentences from a high-level managing director.

Ask each person to speak to particular skills or highlight certain experiences with as much detail as possible. Help out your recommenders by giving them this detail. For example, if you want them to highlight leadership skills, remind them of two or three instances when you skilfully led a project.

Finally, ensure that the sum total of your recommendations covers all your skills and experiences, and that the content in them backs up (or least does not contradict) what you wrote about yourself.

Always thank your recommenders and offer to recommend them too. In fact, go one step further and send along a draft of a potential recommendation.

**BONUS TIP:** The recommendations section of your profile is only displayed once you give or receive a recommendation that isn't hidden.

### 4. Join Groups and Associations

Groups are a way to build relationships and network with people who are doing similar work or have similar interests as you. You have about 1.3 million groups on LinkedIn to choose from.

Join as many relevant groups as you can and contribute to the conversation. As a start, join the alumni groups for where you went to school/ colleague and any industry association groups pertinent to your line of work. When you join the discussion, try to lend your expertise to benefit the conversation and to show your interest and your value.

### 5. View your Profile Strength Meter

Once you have completed your profile, view your [Profile Strength Meter](#) to check if your profile is “All-Star”. According to LinkedIn, your profile will appear 40 times more in search results if it is. In other words, you will be open to 40 times more opportunities.

To qualify, your page must contain the following:

- Your industry and location
- An up-to-date current position (with a description)
- Two past positions
- Your education
- Your skills (minimum of 3)
- A profile photo
- At least 50 connections

Filling in these fields is only the first step, but it's a good one because only 51% of members have a completed profile which means you cut out half the competition!

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*Work Happy Mums is the go-to resource for return-to-work professional women and career advancers. We help women get clarity on what they really want from their career after having children, enhance their skills, rebuild their professional confidence, and successfully navigate career and family to be the best they can be at work and at home.*

*Visit [Work Happy Mums](#) to find out more about us, and get in touch today to schedule your complimentary Career Assessment to see how we can support you on your back-to-work journey and beyond. We're with you every step of the way!*

*Best wishes,  
Melanie Fieseler*

*Director, Work Happy Mums  
[www.workhappymums.com](http://www.workhappymums.com)*