coloradocollege.vault.com

The Right Way to Build Your LinkedIn Profile

Entrepreneurs Tutor

6–8 minutes

These days, it's hard to find a professional who isn't on LinkedIn. LinkedIn now has 830 million members from more than 200 countries worldwide. No wonder it's become a formidable force to reckon with for professional networking.

On some levels, LinkedIn works like a regular job site, allowing you to search and apply for relevant job openings in your fields of interest. But that's not how the LinkedIn algorithm really works. Finding a great professional role through LinkedIn is less about applying for jobs directly and more about networking. The more traffic you get on your LinkedIn page from relevant people and sources, the greater your chances of landing the right opportunities.

So, the key to building a great profile is getting the right kind of attention by giving others a clear idea of your professional experience and achievements. Below, you'll find the 10 essential steps for building out a great LinkedIn profile.

1. Select a great profile picture

Your LinkedIn profile picture is the first thing most people will

check out when they visit your profile. And as they say, first impressions are the last impressions. So, select a profile picture that shows your face clearly. Make sure your look is professional and there's a subtle smile on your face. People prefer working with those who have a pleasing countenance. Think professional and approachable.

2. Upload a great background photo

A background photo is the next most important element of your LinkedIn profile. Your background picture should ideally tell something about your professional achievements. It could be a picture from a ceremony where you won an award or recognition. Or it could be a photo from an important workshop that you recently conducted. A good background photo should make the visitor interested in further checking out your LinkedIn credentials.

3. Create the perfect headline

Consider the headline as your one-line pitch. If someone were to hire you based solely on the headline, what would it be like? Don't stuff the headline with unnecessary adjectives. Nobody is interested in checking out a boastful ego trip. Make it concise, punchy, and relevant to your professional skills. For example, if you're a content writer with a decade of experience, your headline could be something like this: "A content writer with 10 years of experience looking for exciting and challenging writing work."

4. Tell a compelling story about yourself

The "About" section in the LinkedIn profile description is where you get to tell your story. This is the meatiest part of your LinkedIn profile. A lot of thought and consideration must go into writing it out. Some people use this section to merely list their jobs and

skills factually. But too much information without any interesting insight can be a drag for the reader. So, it's best to keep it simple and engaging.

Make sure you highlight all your skills and professional achievements but also focus on your long-term vision. Where do you see your skills taking you next? How do you plan to build on your existing experience and provide something new and innovative to clients? Note that you must cover these points in a catchy and interesting writing style. Avoid using the passive voice. If possible, give an example from a specific work experience that highlights your skills. People don't have time for lengthy descriptions. But they love reading a story.

5. Sync your profile

Building connections is the most important part of LinkedIn. The best way to start is by syncing your profile with your email address directory. If you're working somewhere and using the company's email address, you must have their permission for syncing. Based on this data, LinkedIn can give you recommendations for connections that might come from a similar professional background or share similar interests. Of course, it's up to you to decide which connections to accept.

6. Highlight your skills

LinkedIn has a specific section for highlighting your skills. You must make maximum use of it. You can list industry-specific skills as well as interpersonal skills. You could also match each skill with a specific job profile in which you used that skill. Others from your network can also endorse your skills. This adds more to the value of those skills.

7. Share all relevant content

Your LinkedIn page has many sections where you can list your professional and other achievements—make the most of these features! The “Experience” section just below “About” enables you to write in detail about all your professional experiences chronologically. One of the best sections for showcasing your specific work is the “Featured” section where you can upload text and multimedia files to showcase different kinds of professional assignments.

8. Post regularly and engage with other peoples’ posts

Regularly creating relevant posts is very important to get good exposure on LinkedIn. So, check out the kinds of posts others from your niche are writing and sharing, take some cues from those, then create relevant posts accordingly. Posts could include your own insights into industry trends or the work of other industry leaders that you find interesting. Note that the more relevant posts you create, the greater the chances of expanding your network with the right people. And make sure you include some relevant hashtags every time you write a new post.

It’s equally important to regularly engage with the posts of others from your niche to grow your network. So, make relevant comments when you find something interesting, and share interesting suggestions you might have.

9. Customize your URL

Customizing your URL makes it easier for people to locate your profile. When you’re new to LinkedIn, the forum assigns you a URL that generally contains parts of your last and first name combined with a random bunch of numbers. It’s awkward to share

such a URL on other forums. The simplest thing to do is to remove the numbers and make a custom URL using your complete name.

10. Expand your network

Now that your profile is in the best of shape, it's time to expand your network. The LinkedIn algorithm works like a chain. As you take some initiative and start following people with similar interests, LinkedIn will keep suggesting that you connect with other relevant profiles. You could also follow certain hashtags to see posts made under these topics. Growing your network is all about putting yourself out there.

Entrepreneurs Tutor is an educational website operated by a successful entrepreneur. Its one and only goal is to have everything helpful to an aspiring or already successful entrepreneur in the one place.