

MAXIMIZING YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE- Tip Sheet

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional networking site. Consider the following tips as you create or enhance your profile at www.linkedin.com.

PHOTO

- Consider adding a photo to make your profile look more genuine and to help others identify your profile. (Just having a picture makes your profile more likely to be viewed by others.)
- Use a headshot that is a quality/high-resolution image; avoid distracting backgrounds.
- Select attire that is appropriate for your workplace (or where you want to work); communicate a polished look.

HEADLINE

- Remember that LinkedIn is a personal marketing site. Simply placing your title in your headline might not be the best way to drive views from recruiters and hiring managers to your profile.
- Use up to 120 characters in your headline.
- Use keywords that indicate the functions and skills required for the kind of role(s) you are looking for in your new position.
- Use some of the functions/skills that are important to the work that you are currently doing or have done in the past, such as the following: *Senior Leader, Metals Industry, Supply Chain, Procurement, Sales, Marketing, Graphic Design, Operations Management, Process Improvement, Strategic Planning, Social Media Strategist.*
- Words do not need to be in sentences.
- Use keywords in your headline to drive more views. Also, do not worry that you are repeating words throughout your profile sections (Headline, About, Experience). The more you use words that demonstrate the skills you want to apply in your next job, the better. It is utilizing the concept of keyword density that will help your profile pop up in keyword searches more often.

CUSTOMIZED URL

- Create a customized LinkedIn URL to enhance your personal brand. (LinkedIn provided you with a URL when you registered that includes additional characters not necessary for your brand.)

To customize:

From the LinkedIn home page:

- below your photo (top right side), select the down arrow (by the word "Me")
 - select "View Profile"
 - in the upper right corner of the screen click "Edit Public Profile & URL"
 - under "Edit your custom URL" in the upper right corner, select the blue stylus to edit
 - consider the following suggested URL format: linkedin.com/in/firstnamelastname
- Use your customized URL on your bio, resume, email signature, business cards, and marketing plan.

CONNECTIONS

- Strive for first-level connections with the goal of 300+. The more relevant connections you have, the more views you will receive. (Connections coupled with density of keywords is what drives the views.)
- Set a goal for 5-10 new connections every week within your preferred field of study and/or industry.
- Start with family and friends.
- Target your connections – connect with relevant professionals in companies of interest, schools you attended, and professional organizations.
- Search for and connect with individuals who mark themselves as "LIONs" (LinkedIn Open Networkers) from the geographic location you would like to be employed (Greater Pittsburgh Region, New York City Metropolitan Area, North Carolina, etc.) to efficiently expand your networking opportunities on LinkedIn.

- When connecting with professionals in your industry you do not know personally, ALWAYS include a message when you connect with them. A sample LinkedIn “Connect” message is included below.

Dear Mr. Jones,

We have never met, but I saw your LinkedIn profile on Robert Morris University’s LinkedIn page under the alumni tab. I read in your profile that you have worked as an accountant in both public and corporate accounting. I am an accounting major at Robert Morris University and plan to complete an internship this summer. Before I apply for internships, I would like to learn more about the differences between working in public and private accounting. Can we connect?

Respectfully,
Robert Roy

OPEN TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- Consider letting recruiters know you are open to new opportunities by changing your job search preference settings in this section.
- Set preferences regarding preferred job titles, locations, and types (full-time, contract, part-time, internship, volunteer, temporary, and remote).
- Choose who can see you are open to jobs: all LinkedIn members or only recruiters.
- **Important Note:** LinkedIn take steps to prevent LinkedIn Recruiter users who work at your company and related companies from seeing your shared career interests, but LinkedIn cannot guarantee complete privacy. Carefully consider the privacy/confidentiality needs of your situation. If you do not want your current employer/supervisor to know you are job searching, it is recommended you do not use this feature.

ABOUT

- Use this section to reinforce your brand (headline).
- Go beyond typical resume-speak.
- Use first person pronouns (I statements).
- Tell your story (up to 500 characters), so recruiters and hiring managers can get a better idea of the kind of professional you are in your field.
 - What are you known for?
 - What are your achievements?
 - What do you believe in and stand for in your field?
 - How do you stand out from others?
- Add your accomplishments and relevant skills. (Copy and paste from your resume.) Remember keyword density.

FEATURED

- Showcase samples of your work by uploading your best posts, documents, media, and websites.

ACTIVITY

- Participate in discussions related to your field. Add comments, encourage others, and create content.
- Anyone looking at your profile can see how active or inactive you are, so stay active!

EXPERIENCE

- Keep your resume and LinkedIn profile consistent (but not mirroring data). It is recommended to use your most recent 10-15 years of relevant experience.
- Include a 2-3 sentence “job overview,” letting your target audience know what you were accountable for in each position held. Then, include several bullet points highlighting your accomplishments to gain an advantage over the competition.
- Feature accomplishments that include, where possible, the quantifiable results you achieved.

EDUCATION

- In addition to formal education, list any relevant training you have completed in the last five years.

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS

- Add any relevant licenses and certification.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

- List any volunteer work or community involvement.
- If you are seeking volunteer experience, consider skill-related opportunities first. Also, research what volunteer organizations a company promotes or supports and get involved.

SKILLS & ENDORSEMENTS

- Continue to add skills that are relevant to your career goals. The maximum is 50, but the key is to focus on the skills you want to use in your next job.
- Remove skills you do not want to use in your next position and minimize these keywords in your headline, summary and professional experience sections.
- The more endorsements you have, the more views you will get. One way to increase endorsements is by giving them to others. Endorse skills of colleagues and other professionals you have worked with in the past. Also, consider sending a personalized message to request endorsements from people who know your work well.
- Review your Skills and Endorsements settings and adjust as necessary. (On your profile, click the gray stylus next to the gray "+," then click the three dots and select "endorsement settings.")

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider asking some of your contacts for recommendations. Three recommendations is a good start.
- Consider the following: former/current bosses, former/current direct reports, former/current peers, and perhaps customers or vendors.
- When you ask for the recommendation, offer to return the favor.

ADDITIONAL SECTIONS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Organizations: Add related professional organizations first. (Review profiles of other professionals in your field for suggested professional organizations to join.)

Honors & Awards: Include honors and awards that set you apart from other job seekers.

Courses: List courses relevant to your major/field.

Projects: Describe relevant course projects. Project descriptions can be especially helpful for students or recent graduates. (Projects can also be included in the About section.)

INTERESTS

Influencers: Follow thought leaders and professionals in your field.

Companies: Follow companies in your industry to stay current and keep abreast of trends and news. Also, follow companies for which you want to work.

Groups: Join groups to connect with others in your field, expand your number of connections, and drive views to your profile. (Joining 20+ groups makes your profile more visible; you may join up to 50!)

Schools: Include colleges and universities from which you received a degree. (Search alumni for potential contacts and join university-sponsored groups.)