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# Introduction to LinkedIn

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# Introduction

LinkedIn is the most popular professional social networking site available. We highly recommend each of our clients create a profile and keep it up-to-date in order to gain access to important information, individuals and companies, and to stay competitive. LinkedIn is used for seeking and applying for job postings, posting and viewing resumes, expanding and maintaining a professional network, giving and receiving recommendations, learning about and following companies, tracking industry news, and more.

Recruiters and hiring managers use LinkedIn heavily. They have a vested interest in finding people for their clients as that's how they are compensated. Why not have them seek you out?

Many clients think of LinkedIn as a static "Presence" Page, or an online version of their resume. In fact, it's much more effective as a tool. A majority of LinkedIn's services are available free of charge, but there are also premium (paid) options that give full access.

A LinkedIn account allows a user to:

- Post their resume
- Add a head shot or personal photo
- Find and add contacts
- Search and apply for jobs
- Give, receive, and request recommendations
- Send private messages
- Follow specific companies which will give insight on news, job postings, and more
- Share posts (articles, photos, videos, or your own thoughts)
- Find, join and create online professional networking groups

# 1

## Common LinkedIn Terms

Each social media platform has its own language, and LinkedIn is no different. Here are some of the key terms that will help you navigate your new account:

**Profile:** This is your own personal “page”; it is what others will come across when they find you on LinkedIn. It is similar to a resume in that it should contain key information on your skills, qualifications, and work experience, but it also allows you to showcase documents, photos, links, videos and presentations.

**Home:** This is your “news feed”: it is here that you can see updates from the contacts and companies that you are connected with.

**Connection:** This is LinkedIn’s word for “contact”. Think of it like your digital address book. You can search for specific individuals you know to increase your network, and others can request to add you as well. 1st degree connections are people that you have connected directly. You can also see 2nd and 3rd degree connections, which are individuals that are connected to people within your network. When you are connected to someone, you are also potentially connected to their network, which is the real power of LinkedIn.

**Recommendation:** This is a comment from a LinkedIn member to recommend or praise the work of another LinkedIn member. They typically come from others that highly value your work or services. You can give and receive recommendations, as well as request them from a specific individual. Recommendations can be viewed on your profile (although you can manage and/ or delete them in your settings) and there is no maximum number.

**Skills & Endorsements:** This is a simple way for LinkedIn members to vouch for the skills of their 1st degree connections. These are also visible on your profile and are generally one or a few words.

**Headline:** Your headline is arguably the most important line of your LinkedIn profile. It can hold up to 120 characters and is found just below your name.

**Groups:** LinkedIn groups provide a space for individuals within the same industry or with the same interests to find and share information, post and apply for job openings, make connections, and more. Groups are also very effective for finding and connecting with contacts in your area of interest.

**Mention:** This is the way that members (individuals or companies) “tag” others. The tagged party will receive a notification when this occurs. You can do this by putting an “@” symbol before you start typing the targeted name in your status box. Example “@alan” will give you a drop-down menu where you can then select “Alan Kearns”.

# 2

## Summary

The first step in establishing your LinkedIn presence is setting up your profile. Many of the fields on this page will resemble a traditional resume, and should be completed as such. You can include a head shot, personal contact information, links to your other social media accounts, links to your website or blog and more. Please keep in mind that although you can set tight privacy settings on your profile, you should not post any information or photos that you would not feel comfortable having anyone discover.

LinkedIn will prompt you to complete your profile throughout the set-up process. The more info that you post, the more likely hiring managers will be able to find your profile, and the more likely you will be to hone in on job postings that may be a good fit. The date of your last post is visible, so stay active! Be sure to keep your education, employment and summary up-to-date.

**Headline:** This does not have to reflect your (current or past) job title, particularly if you are currently in transition. Use this opportunity to be memorable show your value proposition- what sets you apart from your competition. This should be thought of as your brand's "slogan".

**Employment Status:** Include a current job entry, even if you're in transition. Typically hiring managers and recruiters use the current job title as the starting point to search for potential candidates (otherwise they would be inundated with old information). An easy workaround, if you're currently unemployed, is to create a job entry with your target job(s) listed alongside a statement about searching for a new role. Ex: "Graphic Designer- seeking new opportunity".

**Summary:** Write your summary in the first person, in a warm and welcoming tone. While much of the rest of the page will read like a resume, this section should be more personalized and give the reader the opportunity to get to know you.

**Specifics:** People who are looking at your LinkedIn profile are wanting to know your real skills, capabilities and results. Refrain from using too many buzzwords, and get specific. Show real accomplishments using numbers (example a certain sales target achieved, or the dollar figure you saved the company, or the number of webinar attendees you teach etc.) or tangibles. Market your value proposition by showcasing your achievements and results.

**Multimedia:** For both your personal summary and each previous position, you can post documents, photos, links, videos and presentations. A picture truly is worth 1,000 words; showcase your work in a visual way where possible and appropriate.

**Photo:** Ensure that you have a personal photo posted. We generally recommend a professional head shot, although an industry-appropriate photo showcasing your style or skills may be a good substitute depending on your specific situation (if so, you should be the only person in the photo, you should be appropriately dressed for your profession, and your phone/ camera should not be visible: i.e. a “selfie” in a mirror).

[Check out a guide to how to DIY your own professional headshot.](#)

**Be Intentional:** Share a post! Similar to other social media, this feature lets you share what’s on your mind with the platform. Keep this professional; share thoughts, news, photos etc.

# 3

## Connections

Not only is it important for you to grow and maintain your professional network, but contacts are also a way for hiring managers to see that you are connected. If you have very few connections on LinkedIn, it says one of three things: either you know very few people, you have a lot of fear surrounding your online presence, or you are not tech savvy. None of these are good! Aim for approximately 50-75 connections before you start applying to jobs or reaching out to recruiters.

**Finding:** Upon sign-up and throughout your usage, LinkedIn will prompt you to give it permission to search for members you may know already through your email. They will direct you to allow them to message those individuals directly, and suggest others that you may know. (You are free to not allow this at any or all stages). You can search for specific people or companies through the search bar at the top of every page on LinkedIn. You can also click on “Connections” and select “Add connections”.

**Connecting:** When you see an individual that you would like to connect with on LinkedIn, you will be able to view their photo and information, and a “Connect” button. You will immediately receive a pop-up window that will ask how you know the person. Select the most appropriate option, and customize the invitation message if desired. The individual will have to accept the invitation in order for you to become 1st degree connections. If you would like to connect with a business, click the “Follow” button to receive news and job posting updates.

**Sorting:** You are able to sort your connections by type- classmates, colleagues, group members etc, as well as by location, company, industry and recently updated profile.

**People You May Know:** LinkedIn wants you to be as connected as possible, that’s their business model. They offer a tool called People you may know that will list people that you may already have in your network. Simply pressing Connect will automatically send that person an invite, without you having to provide their email or have a previous affiliation. When that individual receives your invite, they will note that you have mutual connections.

# 4

## Jobs

**Finding Job openings:** By clicking on “Jobs” from the main menu tab, you will be directed to a page that allows you to search for positions by title, company, or key word. You can also select “Advanced search options”, which can assist in honing in on specific geographical locations and industries. You can click on each of the postings to find out background information on the role and job requirements. You can often apply right from LinkedIn; alternately, the posting will direct you on how to apply.

Many Groups also have Job Postings relevant to that Group. For example, a Finance Group may have Accounting Jobs posted.

### Tips:

- After applying for a role, click on the “Save” button to keep the information for reference. You can also follow the specific organization on LinkedIn to receive updates on job postings and company news.
- Hiring managers or recruiters may reach out to you directly if it appears as though you may have skills, qualifications and experience that match a role they are looking to fill. By ensuring your profile is complete and current, you will increase your chances of being easier to find.

# 5

## Recommendations

Recommendations are an excellent way to display praise from your happy clients/colleagues etc. Because recommendations are linked to the sender (and not anonymous as is often the case online), there is a heightened sense of validity with the feedback.

**Requesting:** To request a recommendation, hover your cursor over the small profile photo in the top right corner of LinkedIn. Select “Privacy and Settings” and then under the “Settings” heading, click on the “Manage your recommendations” option. Click the “Ask for recommendations” tab and follow the prompts. You can ask for 3 recommendations at any given time, but there is no limit to the number you can amass on your profile.

**Giving:** To recommend one of your LinkedIn connections, first go to their profile page. Hover your cursor over the down arrow (▼) and select “Recommend”. Follow the prompts.

**Managing:** If you received a recommendation that you would prefer to not appear on your profile, hover your cursor over the small profile photo in the top right corner of LinkedIn. Select “Privacy and Settings” and then under the “Settings” heading, click on the “Manage your recommendations” option. Select “Received” in the menu bar and scroll down to the recommendation you would like to manage. Click “Edit” and follow the prompts.

# 6

## Settings and Privacy

There are many customizations available in the general and privacy settings on LinkedIn. Hover your cursor over the small profile photo in the top right corner of any LinkedIn page. Select “Privacy and Settings” to gain access.

From here you can update your password, contact information and notification preferences, and more. If you are searching for a new position while currently still employed, the privacy settings will be especially helpful for you; you can choose whether or not to share your profile edits, select you can follow your updates, and change your profile and visibility.

# 7

## Checklist

Are you ready to start using your LinkedIn account to job search, market yourself, and expand your network? Refer to the checklist below to ensure you're prepared!

- Professional headshot
- Unique Headline
- Up-to-Date Background
- Connections (at least 50)
- Recommendations
- Endorsements
- Share (an update, a photo, a post)

# Additional Resources

## LinkedIn Collections

LinkedIn collects/aggregates posts, articles and insights grouped by topics, in [Topics](#) and [Influencers, Channels and Publishers](#). These collections include:

- [LinkedIn Best Practices](#)
- [LinkedIn Tips](#)
- [Your Career](#)

## Articles and Resources

You will find articles and resources in LinkedIn's collections, including some of the following:

- [How to Create an Effective LinkedIn Profile](#)
- [How to Measure Your Success on LinkedIn](#)
- [7 LinkedIn Profile Summaries That We Love \(And How to Boost Your Own\)](#)
- [5 Tips for Picking the Right LinkedIn Profile Picture](#)
- [LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner Shares 4 Tips for Engaging on Social Media](#)
- [6 Steps to the Perfect LinkedIn Profile Summary \[for Recruiters\]](#)
- [What's NOT on Your LinkedIn Profile? 16 Top Recruiters Respond](#)
- [LinkedIn 101: How To Craft A Stellar Profile](#)
- [Webinar - Adding LinkedIn to your career toolbox](#)