

# A Step-by-Step Guide to Mastering LinkedIn

**Part 1:** Creating a Powerful Profile

**Part 2:** Landing a Job through LinkedIn



careerly



# Part 1

## 8 Steps to Creating a Powerful LinkedIn Profile

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### Why should you be on LinkedIn?

The latest survey data says a full 94% of recruiters today use social media in their recruitment efforts. And that is across the board for short order cooks to financial analysts, yet people are puzzled, or at least skeptical, as to why tools like LinkedIn are such game changers.

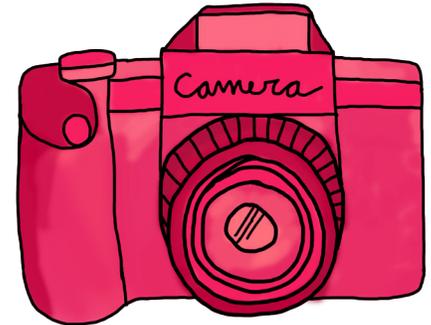
Think of it like this: it used to be that only the demand side of the labor market was organized. Now the supply side of the labor market – i.e. you and me – has a place to hang out. Employers can come and find you, with or without a specific job in mind. LinkedIn is a searchable database of talent and skills. You are potentially visible to everyone specifically looking for what you have to offer.

Imagine if you could permanently run an ad in a world newspaper selling the best of “you” – and that anyone with any opportunity, whether it is a job offer, a consulting gig, or a business deal, could find you. That’s LinkedIn.

In Part 1 of this guide we are going to show you how to create that advertisement in just eight steps. We tracked the before and after results of doing this – and only this much – with 27 of our clients’ LinkedIn profiles. The optimized profiles garnered on average five times as many profile views as before.

# 1. Your Picture

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. Pictures that attest to skill or talent can be uploaded elsewhere on your profile, along with training videos and presentation materials.



You don't have to wear business attire if that's not your style. But you need to look professional and pleasant. Smile. You are going for "dependable" and "trustworthy." Avoid "sexy" or "quirky."

### Do



- Use a headshot
- Look straight ahead
- Use a picture of **only** you
- Be natural
- Think simple and professional
- Consider getting a professional picture taken

### Don't



- Not upload a picture
- Use a picture of anything other than your face (i.e. your dog, a vacation landscape picture, etc.)
- Use a "selfie"
- Use a distracting picture (hats, sunglasses, etc.)

# 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 way to go or you can really use the system to your advantage here. Also, creative headlines come in handy if you are currently looking for work.

## Our recommendation

Choose descriptive and compelling keywords that

- a) make you as marketable as possible
- b) help you get found by the right people.

Remember, LinkedIn is a search engine.

## Examples

- “Recruiter, HR, Talent Management Expert”
- “Brand Marketing, PR, Communications Professional”



# 3. Your Summary

You can think of it 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.

## Various effective approaches

- Copy/paste of your resume’s summary section
- Construct a few paragraphs that reads more like a bio
- Take a core competencies approach - list the three or four key skills you bring to the table
- Take an accomplishments approach - list the three or four big results you have achieved on behalf of your past employers or contacts
- Pair an interesting story with a section called “what you won’t find on my resume”

Play around! You can include high-resolution photos, an infographic of your experience, or a video of a talk you gave. 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

This is the body of your profile – just like on a traditional resume – where you really showcase your experience, expertise, and skills.

Add where you have worked, for how long, and in what roles and functions. Include your current position and **at least** two other positions.



## Two ways to handle this section

**1** Adapt it from your resume; you can copy/paste the relevant job descriptions and accomplishments for each position.

**2** If you are uncomfortable listing too much information under specific employers, you can simply add the name of employer, your position, dates, keep the rest blank, and include in the Summary a more general “skills-based” experience piece.

# 5. Keywords & SEO

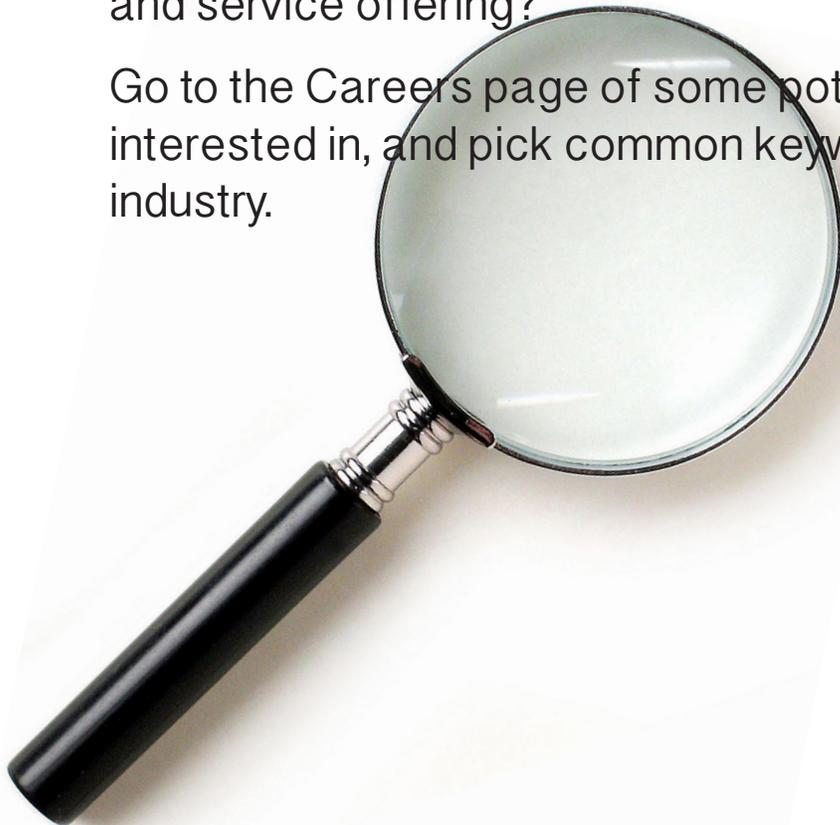
Include keywords **everywhere**, especially in the Summary and Experience sections, for search engine optimization (SEO) purposes.

When recruiters use LinkedIn, they use certain industry-specific key words. These are the terms that will help you show up in their search results within LinkedIn.

## How to figure out your keywords

What words and phrases might people in your target market use to search for someone with your background, experience, and service offering?

Go to the Careers page of some potential employers you are interested in, and pick common keywords around that job or industry.



# 6. Recommendations

This is one area that we see easily fall through the cracks. Yet it is one of the most valuable tools in building up your credibility in the job marketplace.

You have to be proactive about asking for recommendations, following up, and keeping on top of it. 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.

## Have a strategy

1. 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.
  - ✿ If you want them to highlight leadership skills, remind them of two or three instances when you skillfully led a project.
2. 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.
3. Thank your recommenders and offer to recommend them.

# 7. Groups

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 1.9 million groups on LinkedIn to choose from.

### Get started

- Join the alumni groups for where you went to school.
- Join any industry association groups pertinent to your line of work.
- Join as many relevant groups as you can and contribute to the conversation.

When you join the discussion, try to lend your expertise to benefit the conversation and to show your interest and value.

# 8. Achieve a “fully complete” profile

LinkedIn says your profile will appear 40 times more in search results if it is “complete.” In other words, you will be open to 40 times more opportunities if you do this. So please do.

## Definition of a 100% Complete Profile (according to LinkedIn)

- 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



100% profile completeness

# Hello World!

That's it! **Your profile is now ready.**

Use it to position yourself as an expert in your field.

- Keep adding content and optimizing for best results.
- Connect with people and start building a powerful network of old colleagues and future collaborators alike.

## What's next?



In Part 2 we will show you how to use LinkedIn both as a networking tool and a formidable job search engine.



# Part 2

## 7 Steps to Getting a Job Through LinkedIn

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### **Are you effectively using LinkedIn?**

There are more than 300 million people on LinkedIn at last count. This means you want to be on it. But you also don't want to get lost in the crowd.

Now, we'll show you how to actually use LinkedIn once you are properly on it.

LinkedIn is a formidable professional networking platform as well as a powerful job board and search engine. The fact that a full 94% of recruiters use social media, in particular LinkedIn, to fill open positions should get you excited.

Here's how you can use this game-changing platform to get your next job...

# 1. Understand where LinkedIn “fits in”

In order to use it well, it's important to understand how LinkedIn fits into the larger context of social media networking.

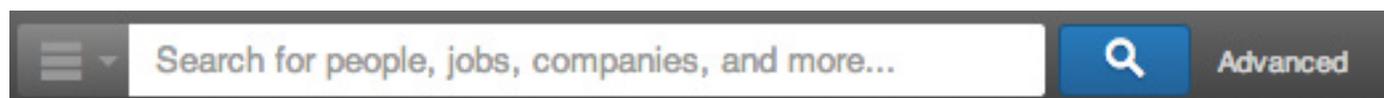
Facebook is about brand and identity, whether that is a personal profile or a business page. Twitter is about events or occurrences, which could be a missing plane in the Indian Ocean or letting your audience know that your latest blog post is published. **LinkedIn** is the best channel for engaging with people and organizations that could potentially hire you.

LinkedIn allows users to effectively research people and companies. This is something that's very handy before meeting a contact for coffee, when requesting an informational chat with someone, and, especially, as key preparation before a formal job interview.

You want to know everything you possibly can about the person/people who is/are interviewing you. It will help you ask good questions as well as find points of connection over which you can bond. For example, perhaps you went to the same school or once lived in the same city or country.

# 2. Use the search function to your advantage

As already mentioned, LinkedIn is a high-power search engine.



To get started with search, go to the search bar on top; this is where you will type in your search terms. For example, if you type in “MBA career coaching,” you will get a list of related jobs, groups, and people doing similar work. If you are connected to them, it will prompt you to message them, and if you are not, it will prompt you to connect.

The drop down box next to the search bar (or once you are in “search,” the menu at the top left) allows you to customize your search by people, jobs, companies, groups, and inbox. Click “jobs” and you can further hone in by location, connections, industry, job function, and experience level.



# 2.1 Search for jobs

Now, let's say you click on a Product Manager position at Google located in San Francisco. One of the most helpful features of LinkedIn is that in addition to details on that job, you will get:

1. A list of other jobs at Google,
2. A list of similar jobs at other companies (for example, a Product Manager position at Facebook),
3. A list of other jobs that people who viewed this job also viewed.

## There's more!

You'll see a list of people that connect you to the position you are viewing, showing you exactly how and through whom you are connected. This is priceless because now, you can write that networking email (see no. 7 below) asking your friend from graduate school to connect you to his friend from college who now works in that department at Google.

One last thing. LinkedIn's intelligent search will, over time, get a feel for what your preferences are and give them to you. You see now why search engine optimization (SEO) is important when you are crafting your own profile. The right keywords get you found by people who are using those terms. So, make sure you are findable.

# 3. Create interesting shareable experiences

Speaking of being findable, one of the ways of standing out is to be perceived as a solid professional in your field, someone knowledgeable and highly employable. To do that, you need to share your expertise and experience...and be heard above the noise.

Lindsay Pollak, a great resource for absolutely anything LinkedIn-related, defines a shareable experience as one where you can provide a status update about that highlights your exposure and interest and/or shares valuable information with your network. Examples of shareable experiences include attendance at important conferences and events, access to key industry folks, and opportunities to provide expertise or feedback.

Visuals matter more and more. So when you are at that conference or running a training or workshop, use a picture from that event with your update.

## The truth is

In this age of ubiquitous social media, everyone is constantly collecting and sharing experiences. When we experience something special, we want to record it and share it.



# 4. Join relevant groups, contribute, & engage

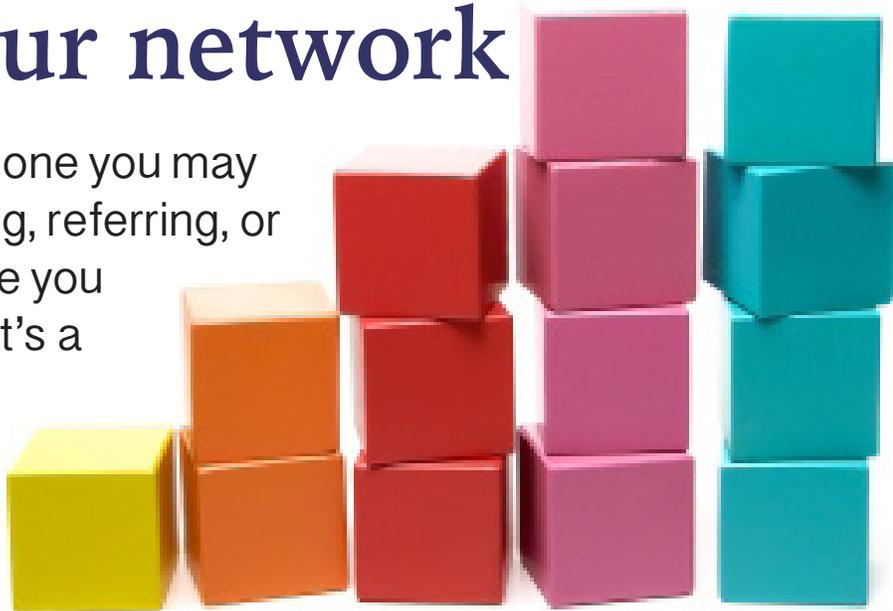
There are hundreds of thousands of groups on the platform from retail and finance to social media and marketing. You will find interests and topics on any business subject imaginable. The latest research shows that the groups feature is the top favorite of users.

## LinkedIn Group Basics

1. Post useful and interesting content in your groups. This may include articles and blog posts you read (or wrote), a funny (but work-related!) video you watched, or a major report on your industry that just hit the news.
2. Make it easy for others to engage with you. Ask a question where people can give a very short answer, for example, “What do you think is the secret to ultimate job satisfaction: i) talent, ii) passion, or iii) money?”
3. Remember to engage back; reply to all comments you receive, even if it’s just a short thank you! Don’t argue with people, but instead, try to facilitate a good discussion.

# 5. Make connections and build your network

Everyone you meet is someone you may end up working for, recruiting, referring, or advising. This is really where you see the magic of LinkedIn; it's a veritable live global village of mentors and mentees, job leads, and business opportunities.



So, connect with everyone and make it personal.

**Make it** *personal*

Send a customized message when you ask to connect with people in the vein of:

*It was a pleasure to meet you at the conference. I enjoyed our chat. Good luck with your projects, and let's keep in touch.*

*Warm regards, Hira.*

This way, you establish and build the relationship right from the start. And the receiver will likely appreciate your extra effort and remember you among the sea of people he or she met at that conference.

# 6. Take recommendations (& endorsements) seriously

Endorsements are provided at the click of a button and don't really say that much about the endorser's experience of you and that skill. A huge volume of endorsements looks good (so, there is no harm in collecting them), and all you have to do is tell LinkedIn what your skills and expertise are - you can add up to 50 skills.

Recommendations, should be taken more seriously. We cannot stress enough the incredible value that recommendations provide. They add layer upon layer of credibility in the eyes of prospective employers. If you are in a client-based role, clients writing on your behalf essentially serve as testimonials. For an independent consultant or a freelancer, this is golden

## Asking for a recommendation

1. Offer to help. Remember that people are busy, and also, most people don't like writing recommendations! They may think great things about you but be at a loss when it comes to putting pen to paper. It would be a relief to get some information from you reminding them of projects you worked on, goals you accomplished, and examples of key skills you used in that job. Always remember to say, "Please feel free to adjust this as you see fit."
2. Offer to return the favor and write a recommendation for your recommender. That's just good business practice.



# 7. Write thoughtful networking e-mails



Here are some basic tips for writing good networking emails that will get you a response.

1. Keep it simple and make sure that what you are asking for is clear. If you are looking for opportunities in XYZ field and would like to connect to Mr. Smith to have an informational chat about his experience in that field, then say so. Don't say that you'd like any job in that field. Mentioned your skills and explain how they match a particular job or opening.
2. Act according to your objective. If you want a contact to forward your information, write an email that is easy to forward. If you want a contact to make an introduction, ask for it clearly, but give them an out. They may not have spoken to that person in a long time or don't feel comfortable making the intro for other reasons.

**ex.** *Dear Stephen,*  
*I hope this message finds you well. I am applying for the Community Director position with the Humane Society, a favorite organization of mine. I saw that your friend, Sarah Michaels, works for HS. I was wondering if you would feel comfortable making a connection between us, as I'd love to chat with her about her time at HS and my interest in this position. Many thanks in advance.*

*Best, Barbara*

# A connected future

Finally, let us say this. As much as LinkedIn is currently one of the greatest tools available for finding the job of your dreams, it's not about the job.

It's about your future. It's about taking a genuine and active interest in your career and your life. It's about relationships, opportunities, and all kinds of possibilities that could come your way because you are now in touch with hundreds of interesting people representing a vast continuum of backgrounds, talents, connections, and experiences.

## About *careerly*

We are a Washington D.C. based career strategy and coaching company with clients across the globe from London and Rome to Mozambique and India, as well as of course, the United States. We're best known for our combination of left brain analysis and right brain intuition.

Our services run the gamut from resumes to high-level career design. We exist to help you understand your own ambition, and match your natural gifts, talents, and skills to what the world needs and/or what the market will pay for. We want a more rewarding and fulfilling career experience for everyone.

We are skilled at working with a pretty diverse cross-section of clients, from graduates of the top MBA programs to mid-career professionals to the long-term unemployed.

[www.careerly.co](http://www.careerly.co)

