

# Take Full Advantage of Your LinkedIn Presence



LinkedIn continues to be an excellent tool for Human Resources departments and professionals on many levels. Understanding the benefits of LinkedIn and learning how to build a credible presence can be the first step in a strategy to gain an advantage from this highly visible tool.

## LinkedIn Advantages

- Knowledge and Trending: The ability to gather useful professional information from colleagues can save time and energy as a collective of professionals sourcing and sharing is a great way to stay on top of developments in the HR industry, business and beyond.
- Career Development: The personal professional advantages of using LinkedIn to build professional credibility and serve as the groundwork for potential future career opportunities.
- Recruiting: Not only as a tool for finding and checking up on the background, activities and consistency of a candidate but for attracting and making a positive (or negative) impression on the candidates you are targeting.
- Relationship Building: Beyond relationship building with professional colleagues or potential future employees LinkedIn can be a useful tool for building internal relationships with colleagues, other employees and senior leadership.
- Positioning and Influence: As an organization or individual LinkedIn can be a passive and active forum for influencing and staking a position in your industry.

## Elements of a Professional LinkedIn Profile

### Your Name

Of course you know your name but the questions you can ask yourself are what name and should you only use your name. If you want to optimize your findability you want to use the name most people know you by but you may want to add initials or a nickname to your name. For example "Jane (Jay) Jones" (if everyone knows you as 'Jay') or if you have changed names you may consider your previous name in brackets.

You then also want to consider if you should add your credentials or a title. Do you add Dr., Ph.D., MBA or other industry relevant credentials such as CHRP at the end of your name? Adding industry relevant credentials can be a good way to demonstrate your

qualifications and stake your claim within your industry. IT helps others upon a quick glance gain some information about your Brand and positioning.

### Your Header or Headline

This is one of the most effective ways to display your brand to others. Many people simply allow their current job title to be their headline. Yet this defines what you do not who you are. However, if you are involved in helping position your organization publically or involved in recruiting you don't want to stray to far from being identified with your organization. Consider an option that claims your brand and acknowledges your current job and company. Using "/" or "|" or "-" and other symbols can allow you to create a header that captures who you are and what you do.

Begin with key words such as your industry positioning and then end with your current role. For example

Human Resources | Manager / Benefits Admin / Recruiter | Partner at ABC Industries

If you are inclined to be creative you might include some other symbols such as a star, circle or square (you have to copy and paste these in). You can also include a brief phrase such as

Human Resources | Manager| Rock Star Recruiter |Partner at ABC Industries

It is okay to let your personality show through.

### Your Summary

This is not your resume summary being sent to someone unknown. LinkedIn is a social network and your summary is part of the conversation. This means you can use first person language and invite people into the conversation.

Position your summary to let the reader know who you and why they should trust and connect with you. You can include a brief brand style statement that introduces who you are and why you are there. You may choose to position yourself or your role and organization first depending on your current LinkedIn goals. Do not only focus on your organization and use this as only a marketing tool for your company (unless you are self-employed) because people want to connect with you first.

Provide a brief overview introduction to position your self and then share some of your highlights and achievements. If you are positioning the company you can include a summary of the company and some of the companies' bestselling features.

### Your Professional Experience

Include a brief summary of the organization and your position in the organization (brief means 1-2 sentences).

For your current and recent relevant positions include 3-4 points that provide a glance into your role and your achievements in organization. Today LinkedIn is still a teaser and not your entire resume. Keep it focused and interesting but not a full outline of your professional experience.

### Projects

Projects are often overlooked yet they can be a great way to add information and connect with colleagues. You can include work projects that occurred as a result of your job or projects outside of work. You can also tag and mention other people in these projects. This can be a great way of requesting a recommendation. Add a person

to a project and send them a message asking if they would mind endorsing or recommending you for your skills used during the project.

You do not need to include a lot of information, just the project focus and key goals or achievements.

**Endorsements Tip:** The LinkedIn Endorsements section has become a good way to showcase your skills and reputation. Did you know that you can reorder the skills and in doing such increase the number of times they pop up to be endorsed by your contacts? This can help you highlight and get more endorsements for skills you may want to become more known for.

Do not approach LinkedIn as a chore but as a tool for your success. Spending as little as one hour a week on LinkedIn can help lay the groundwork for future success if you create an effective LinkedIn profile and keep in mind your goals.