

How To Improve Your LinkedIn Profile Strength

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<https://bebusinessed.com/linkedin/improve-linkedin-profile-strength/>

If you're looking at improving your LinkedIn profile strength, you've come to the right place. These tips are all relatively easy and quick yet can make a huge impact on your profile's visibility and, thus, your chances of receiving new job opportunities.

Make Your Profile 100% Complete

As you fill out your profile, you'll see what is gauged as your LinkedIn profile strength meter. This percentage indicates how complete your profile is. Why does this matter? Put simply, LinkedIn's search function will prefer profiles that are more complete and put them toward the top of search results. That can be the difference between a recruiter seeing your page or not. Add to that the fact that a complete profile is 40 times more likely to receive an opportunity than an incomplete one.

Add a Professional Head Shot

One of the best ways of improving your LinkedIn profile is adding a professionally produced picture. This may mean hiring a photographer for a few hundred dollars, but your investment will pay off in spades. You can use the photo across your online presence and on your business card. Leaving your profile photo blank out of shyness or insecurity is tempting, but know that profiles with photos get 14 times more views than those without.

Include Monikers

This is especially important if you have a commonly misspelled name or are a married woman with a maiden name. Find room in your opening summary to include a short "a.k.a" section.

Ex: "Michael Smythe, a.k.a., Michael Smith, Mike Smythe, Mike Smith" or "Jayne Percy, formerly Jayne Wright, a.k.a. Jane Wright, Jane Percy." As keywords, these misspellings and name mistakes will show up both in Google and in LinkedIn's search function, as long as they're listed near the top. If someone looks for you by the wrong name, they have a better chance of still finding you.

Improve Your Opening Description

The first 156 characters of your opening summary description will show up on Google. You want to enhance this section with keywords that recruiters may be searching. If you're not sure what keywords to lead with, search for some job postings that suit the position you are ideally seeking. The words that repeat across multiple job postings are usually the same words they'll search to find you. Note: You still want this section to be readable, don't just rattle off unrelated words!

Build Up Your Connections – Aim for 50 to 100

Start with co-workers and managers with whom you have a good relationship. You may even want to add close family and friends who can vouch for your job skills. Connections are intended to be only for people you actually know and have worked with, but in some cases it doesn't hurt to add other professionals based on personal recommendations. You can ask a friend or colleague for an "Invitation" on LinkedIn to get a connection with someone they know that you don't.

Ask for Recommendations

Once you've built up your connections, send a friendly note to a few people who are the most familiar with your work. Ask if they can spend a minute leaving a recommendation on a project or problem you helped them overcome. Most are very happy to do it, they just didn't think to!

Make Sure the Groups That Show Reflect Well

When you first sign up for LinkedIn, its wizard set-up will try to get you to add groups right away. If you skipped this—like a lot of people do—now is the time to go back and find some quality groups. For one, they are a great resource for learning, offering your knowledge, and networking in general. But a secondary benefit is that a few of your groups will show up on your profile giving recruiters and hiring managers a better idea of who you are. You want to pick 3 to 4 groups to display on your page as highlights, using the "Hide" function to keep the rest from cluttering your page or pushing out the more relevant group names.

Expand On Your Resume

At first glance, it seems like setting up your profile is essentially transferring your résumé line by line. If you did this when you first signed up, it's time to regroup and improve your LinkedIn profile strength. We have been told for years that a résumé should be one page, maybe two if you're a consummate professional with decades of relevant experience. However, with LinkedIn, you have recruiters and hiring managers, among others, seeking out your profile for more information. In fact, you may be surprised to learn that once you submit your actual résumé to a company, they may in turn look you up on LinkedIn for more information to decide whether they want to interview you or not.

So don't give them the same exact information on your profile; use the space provided to bolster your LinkedIn profile strength. Expand on points you might otherwise have had to save for an interview. Include media like pictures, videos, PowerPoint presentations—we can't stress the multimedia options enough. Fill your profile with as much relevant content as you can without going into "fluff."

Use Synonyms

LinkedIn uses keywords to crawl and display profiles in its search function. The trouble is, unlike Google, LinkedIn does not account for synonyms. If you write that you are in

“customer service,” someone searching for “sales associate” may not find you. Even if they seem like no-brainers, it’s best to naturally weave in these additional terms. This bears repeating even for formal titles. Some companies use quirky or unique position names. While you want to be accurate and not inflate your job title, you also want to account for those searching for someone with your skill set. The job title listed at the top next to your name should be an accurate and common description of what you actually do. You can list your company’s more unique title in your description.

Work On Your Headline

Improving your LinkedIn profile by updating your headline is one of the most effective changes you can make. By default, LinkedIn uses your company name and job title in your headline, yet this is ideal real estate to sell yourself so much better. Don’t be afraid to add your own twist to this headline area by giving a snappy, even humorous description of your day-to-day job duties.

Pick 3 Skills

LinkedIn lets you choose up to 50 skills, but this is really overboard for the vast majority of users. Pick 3 skills at a minimum to highlight and pull them to the top of the list using the reordering tool. How many you add will depend on your field and experience, but be careful to not drown your real strengths in a sea of obvious or common skills. Next, you want to obtain skill endorsements. Contact your first-degree connections and ask if they’d be willing to endorse your top skills. This can have a lot of weight with recruiters and hiring managers.

Reach Out To Your Alumni Career Center

Many colleges and universities have free and unlimited career center support. Reach out and make an appointment where a career expert can help you tailor your verbiage to your industry’s needs.

Have a Friend Proofread

There’s nothing worse than coming across an accomplished looking profile that is riddled with errors. To be fair, not everyone is a born writer, and writing about ourselves is notoriously difficult. But your LinkedIn profile strength will be maximized with clean, error-free copy. Cal up your English major friends or co-workers and ask for a quick proofread.

Don’t Browse Anonymously

Double-check your browsing settings. You may have turned on anonymous browsing so you could check out competition, but you need to set it to public browsing when you’re on the job hunt or looking for leads. Every time you view someone’s profile, you’ll show up in the last 5 people to check their page. This can cause them to click your profile back. You can see how this is useful if you start researching the recruiters and hiring managers of companies you’re interested in applying to.

Google Yourself

Google your name right now. What comes up? Ideally, you want your LinkedIn to come up near the top, particularly if you're on the job hunt. You certainly don't want drunken party photos or polarizing social media comments to come up on top. If you have made good use of keywords in your LinkedIn profile, you should see it on the first page or two. It can also help to start your own personal-professional website branded with your name and industry.

If you can't beat out some less-than-professional results on the first page, you may want to contact a reputation management company. LinkedIn will not be the end of a recruiter or hiring manager's search. They will Google your name and see exactly what you are seeing unless you take direct action to fix it.

Personalize Your LinkedIn URL

It's very quick and easy to change your profile's link from a random string of letters to your actual name. This looks much more professional both on LinkedIn itself and on business cards and other materials. If your name isn't available, try adding your profession or industry at the end rather than a middle initial.