

LinkedIn

Profile Checklist

- 1. **Profile Picture**

Make sure you have a high-quality profile headshot. There's no better way to seem approachable and human--and give people an immediate sense of who you are. Plus, LinkedIn data shows that having one makes you 7 times more likely to have your profile viewed.

Here are some pointers for picking the right photo:

 - To look friendly and approachable, be sure to smile!
 - Take advantage of the space available by uploading a profile picture that's at least 200px by 200px. Even better, use one that's much larger. LinkedIn has crop and scaling features to make your image look its best.
 - Avoid busy backgrounds or including others in your photo, unless it relates to your line of work. A neutral, solid-colored background makes the best impression, as it keeps the focus on you.

- 2. **Headline**

Use a headline that describes the job you want and your key skills. The best approach is to imagine what a recruiter might type into the search box and use some of those words. If you're unsure what keywords to use, look at relevant job descriptions and which words and phrases pop up frequently.

Examples:

 - Environmental Policy Analyst and SQL Expert Seeking opportunities at Nonprofits
 - Director of Public Relations and Marketing | Expert at raising brand awareness and developing partnerships
 - VP of Sales | Experience growing and leading global teams of 100+
 - Social Media Expert driving successful B2B and B2C campaigns on a shoestring budget. Average ROI of 500
 - Six Sigma Master Black Belt dedicated to process excellence in email operations
 - Procurement & Contract Specialist | Treasury Manager | Trilingual in Spanish, French, and German

- 3. **Summary**

A good summary consists of a few brief paragraphs summarizing your professional background, key areas of expertise, and any accomplishments you're particularly proud of. Check to see if your profile gives the reader a good sense of who you are and what you can do for a potential employer.

To maximize readability, consider using a bulleted list to break up the text. (You can create a bullet by pressing and holding the Alt or Option key and typing the numbers 0, 1, 4, and 9. Or just use hyphens instead.)

Lastly, the summary is a good place to account for gaps in your work history and prove how you've kept your skills fresh. If you did any kind of freelance work, took a professional class, worked in a family business, or volunteered skills at a nonprofit, this could potentially be listed as work experience.

- 4. **Experience**

In the experience section, we recommend listing at least three recent jobs, with detailed descriptions of your duties and accomplishments at each one.

Checking for the following:

 - If you are switching careers, is it clear how your skills transfer to the new career?
 - Are any acronyms or jargon explained or spelled out?
 - Are all your accomplishments quantified in a way that would draw readers in?
 - Is it clear what each employer does? If not, it may be worth adding a 1 sentence description for each company/organization.

- 5. Skills, Endorsements, and Recommendations**

It's always a good idea to have a mix of endorsements and recommendations to show and not just tell employers what you can do.

 - Check to make sure you have at least 5 transferrable skills listed, with endorsements for each one.
 - It can sometimes help to reorder endorsements to reflect one's professional aspirations. The skills you want to be known for most should come first.
 - Check to see if you have at least 1 written recommendation for each position listed on your profile.
 - While recommendations from direct reports or peers are nice, recommendations from managers are most impactful.

- 6. Education**

Check to see if you have listed all your schools and colleges. Many jobs have a required educational level. Plus, you never know when a hiring manager might be a fellow alum!

Additionally, some LinkedIn members choose to list specific courses they've taken. If you have chosen to do that, focus on the courses that most directly relate to the job you want rather than including the full list.

- 7. Miscellaneous**

Here are a few more tips to help take your profile from good to great:

 - Make sure it's immediately clear what you are looking for. Sometimes focusing on too many diverse types of jobs can make it hard to optimize one's profile for any one thing.
 - Unless the industry is particularly formal, LinkedIn profiles are best written in the first person. It may make you seem more approachable to people viewing your profile.
 - Use your summary and headline to clarify what sets you apart from other candidates by emphasizing the 2-3 key business results you can achieve.
 - Check for spelling and grammar mistakes. A pristine profile makes a stronger first impression.
 - Use the new Professional Portfolio feature to add anything from presentations to videos to images of key projects and accomplishments. People are visual, so help them visualize the value you can bring to their organization.