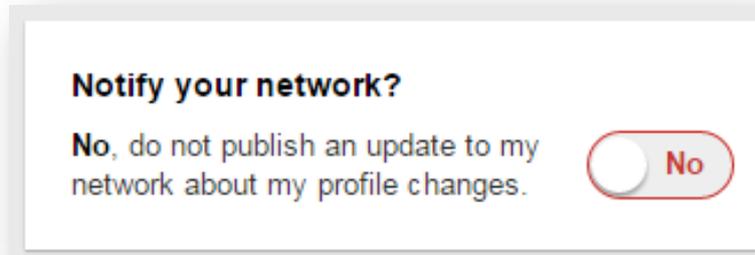


LinkedIn Guide 1: Getting Set Up

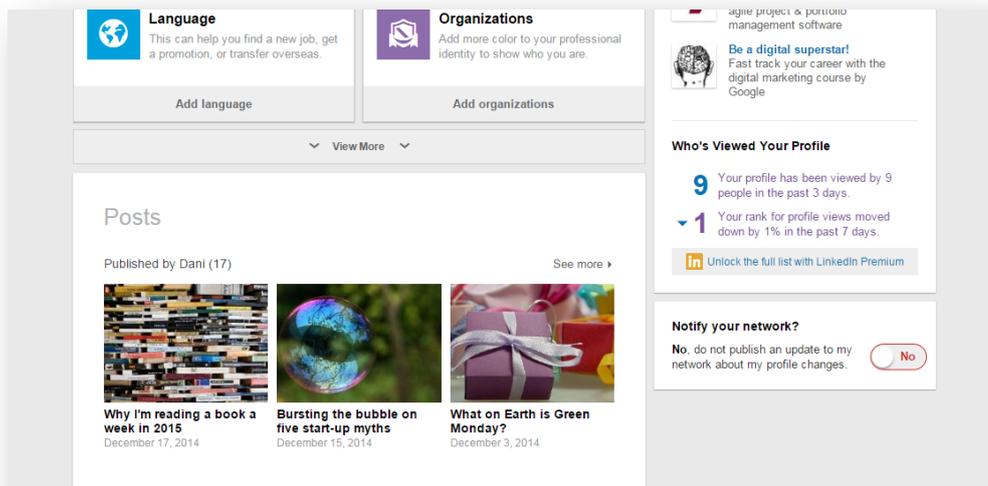
Whether you're brand new to LinkedIn, or you've had an account for a while and are not sure what to do with it, this guide will help you get started. Rather than being prescriptive on what to write and how to write it, the following pages explain the most important sections of your LinkedIn profile – giving you some ideas of what you could include – leaving you to fill in the gaps and let your experience and personality shine through.

Before you start

If you're planning to make a lot of changes and tweaks to your profile, make sure you set "Notify your network" to "No" otherwise you'll be posting an update every time you hit save, inundating your network with notifications.

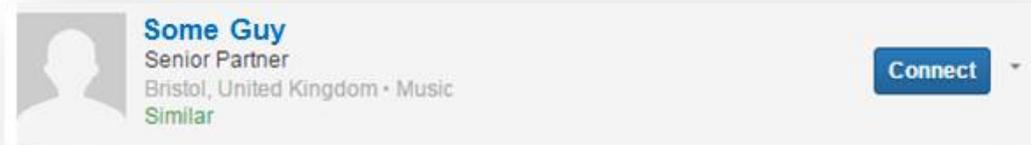


The "Notify your network" feature is better used when adding career-defining moments to your profile such as recent promotions or new publications and qualifications.



First impressions

Your profile header is the first opportunity you have to establish your professionalism, expertise and personality. Not only is it the very first thing viewers see, it's also how you appear in search results on LinkedIn. Failure to make the most of this section will result in you appearing like this... if at all.



Appearing in results like this is less likely to encourage people to want to click on your profile and network with you. So when completing this section of your profile, remember:

- 1. Use a professional photo.**
Avoid holiday snaps and selfies.
Keep in mind that the people looking at you know little about you.
Consider first impressions.
- 2. Include your full name.**
To make it easier for your existing offline network to find you.
- 3. Write a descriptive headline .**
Not just your job title. Something that is unique to you works best.
Avoid ★gimmicks★and stand out simply by being yourself. Again, people search for specialisms and expertise, so think about how you want to appear in search and what the people you want to network with might be trying to find.
- 4. Detail your sector.**
You may be in financial services but within that, you may have a more specific specialism, such as “Marketing and Advertising” or “Insurance”.
- 5. Specify your location.**
This is especially important when developing a local network.
- 6. Complete Contact Information...**
including email address and phone number as a minimum. Add your address if applicable.
- 7. Fill in the rest of your profile.**
Complete the Experience and Education sections of your profile.

A note on headers...

The importance of first impressions can't be stressed enough, and on LinkedIn, your header will help you make a good one. You can almost think of it like a digital business card. Not only is it the top of your profile and your entry in search results, it's also used to communicate new connections and connection requests.

As shown in the below example, you can even include contact information, so when you request a connection, your phone number is right there, bringing you even closer to your client or prospect.

Second chances

If your profile header is your first impression, then your summary is definitely your second. Your summary should do just that... summarise. If visitors to your profile only read one section before they leave, what are the main things you want them to know about you?

1. **Keep your summary.**
Remember most people will read this on a screen, so keep the language simple and the paragraphs short.
2. **Get your messages across quickly.**
What are your areas of specialism and expertise? What value do you add? What's unique? Why should people connect with you?
3. **Communicate your personality.**
Be yourself and not just a clone of another profile. Keep it professional.
4. **Consider your client.**
As with your headline, consider what your desired network might be searching for and include this in your summary where applicable.
5. **Get visual.**
Too many words can be hard to swallow so; if you can say it in pictures do so. Instead of a paragraph on being a "Google Analytics Accredited Individual", consider including the logo instead.

Looking at the detail

Once you've given the above sections your full attention, completing the rest of your profile should be next on your list. This serves two purposes:

1. **For your network:** completing your profile, gives your now captivated audience a complete rundown of your skills, knowledge and experience.
2. **For your visibility:** completing your profile fills it with keywords and phrases that relate to your skills, knowledge and experience making it more likely that you'll appear in search results for those terms.

Experience

Think CV, complete your history and tell your story. Why you changed roles? What led to your promotion? Why you've chosen to stay loyal to one company for a long period? What did you do in your year off? What drove the career change?

Education

Got a Business Degree? Qualified Accountant? Certified Insurance Broker? This is your opportunity to show off your credentials.

Courses

Like education, if you have completed courses, detail them to demonstrate your commitment to continuous professional development.

Skills

Where are your specific areas of expertise? What skills are likely to win you recommendations? Broad skills are great but if you can, include a couple of more specific ones.

Start using your profile

If you've completed all of the above steps, you should now have a profile that presents your professionalism, personality, specialisms and expertise. So why not show it off. But there's one more thing to do first – Get your custom URL.

Without doing this your profile URL is a less than captivating string of random letters and number. But by completing the following steps, you can edit your URL to something more memorable and easy to type. Ready to put in your email signature. Even on your business card.

1. Hover over “Profile” and select “Edit Profile” from the drop down list:
2. Below your photo you should see your existing URL with “Edit” or a pencil icon next to it
3. After clicking the above, you'll be presented with a view of your public profile. On the right hand side of the page, you should see options to “Customize Your Public Profile”. At the bottom of this column, you can create your customer URL.
4. First, try inserting your name. If that isn't available, try initials, using middle initials, etc. Your URL should represent you so try to avoid numbers if possible.

In summary

If you're reading this far and have tried out some of the ideas, you'll now have a shiny new profile that's ready to share with your network – as well as new contacts you make along the way. Be sure to connect with the people you meet along the way. And explore some of your old relationships too (previous roles, colleges and universities).

You never know where the next valuable connection might be waiting.