



Profile Setup and Optimisation

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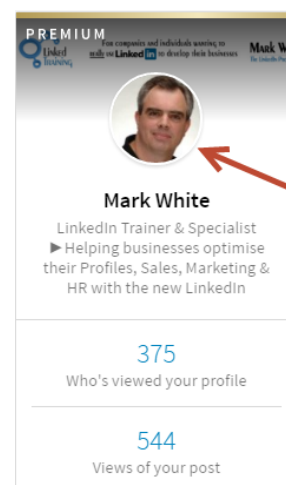
Introduction

Your Personal Profile on LinkedIn is the cornerstone of your activity and fundamental to your success. For most people, the profile will be the first thing that they turn to and read as they start to find out about you. And, as we know, first impressions count.

It's therefore important to ensure that you use the different elements of the profile to best effect and so leave the visitor in no doubt as to what you offer, what you can do for them and why they should be talking to you rather than to your competition - and remember that your competition is likely to be on LinkedIn too. If you do that, then you stand a much greater chance of getting people to take the next step of inviting you to connect, checking out your Company Pages or visiting your website to find out more information.

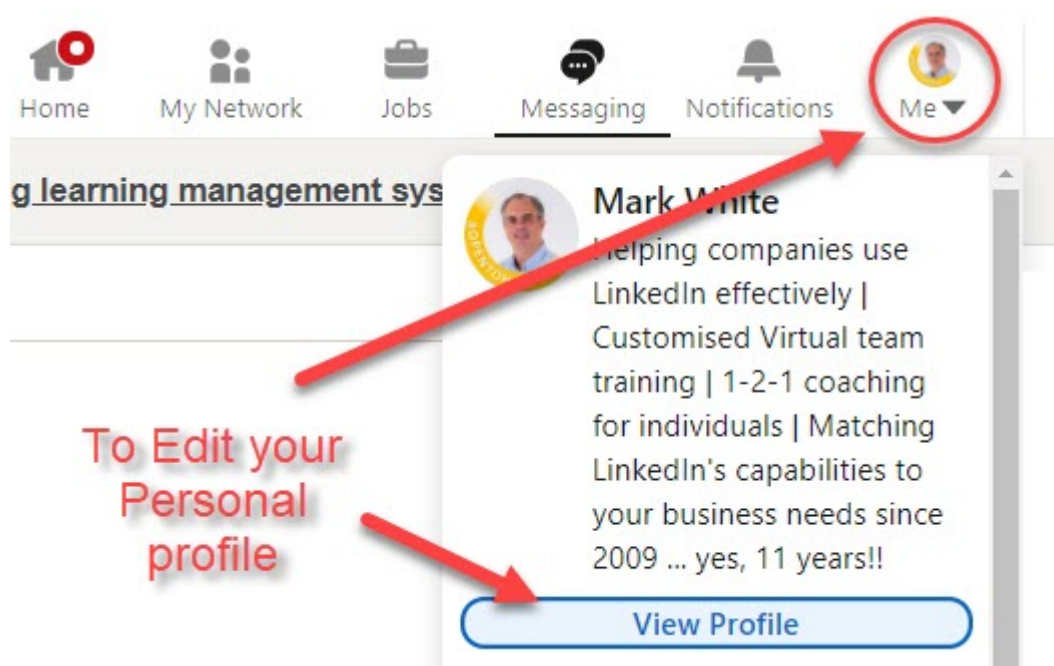
Turning first to practical issues, the information that we are focusing on here can be found in the Profile section within your LinkedIn account which is accessed from one of two places:

i) if you are on the homepage, then on the left-hand side of the page, you should have a "floating box" which gives you access to your Profile page by clicking on 'Update your profile'. Equally, you seem to be able to just click on your name now as well.



From the homepage you can reach and edit your profile page

ii) Alternatively, you can also access via the main navigation menu at the top of each page. by clicking on 'Me' and then 'View Profile'.



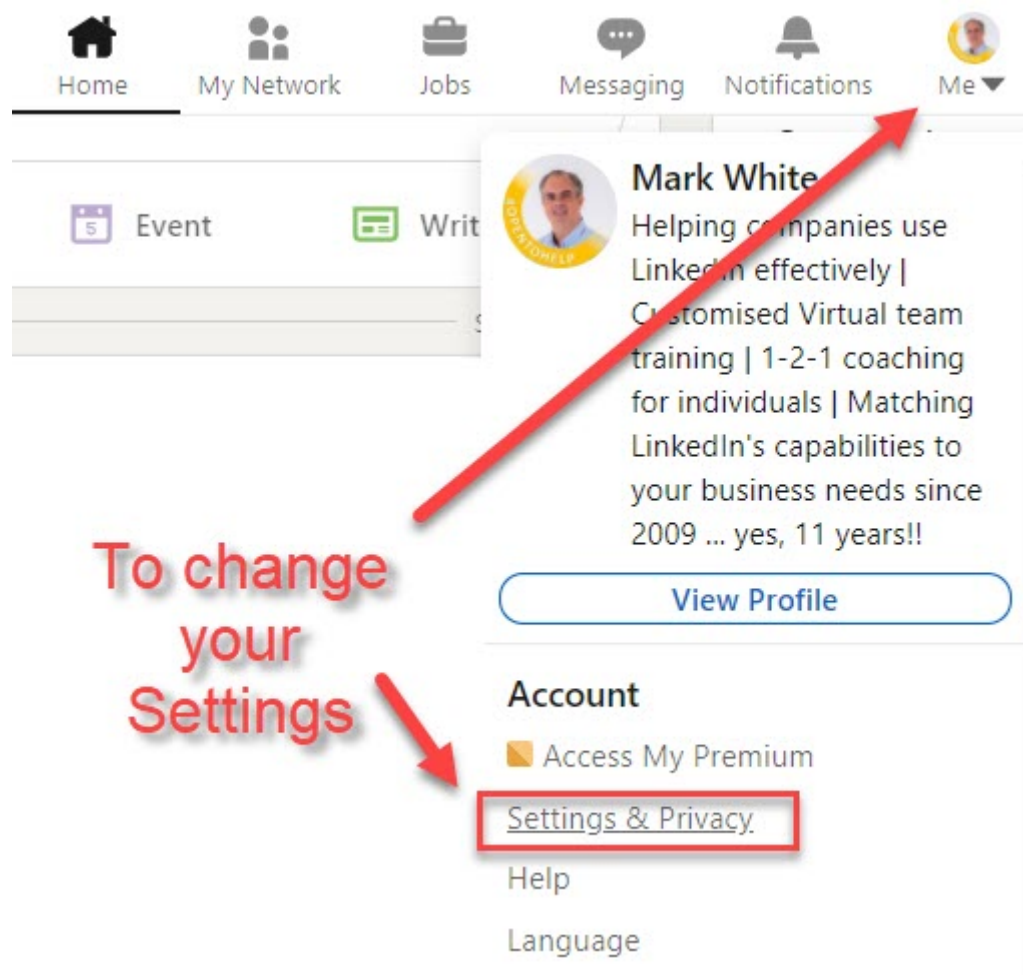
To Edit your Personal profile

In this area, you will find all the details that we will be looking at here as we go through each of the profile elements in an effort to make sure that they are working to best effect.

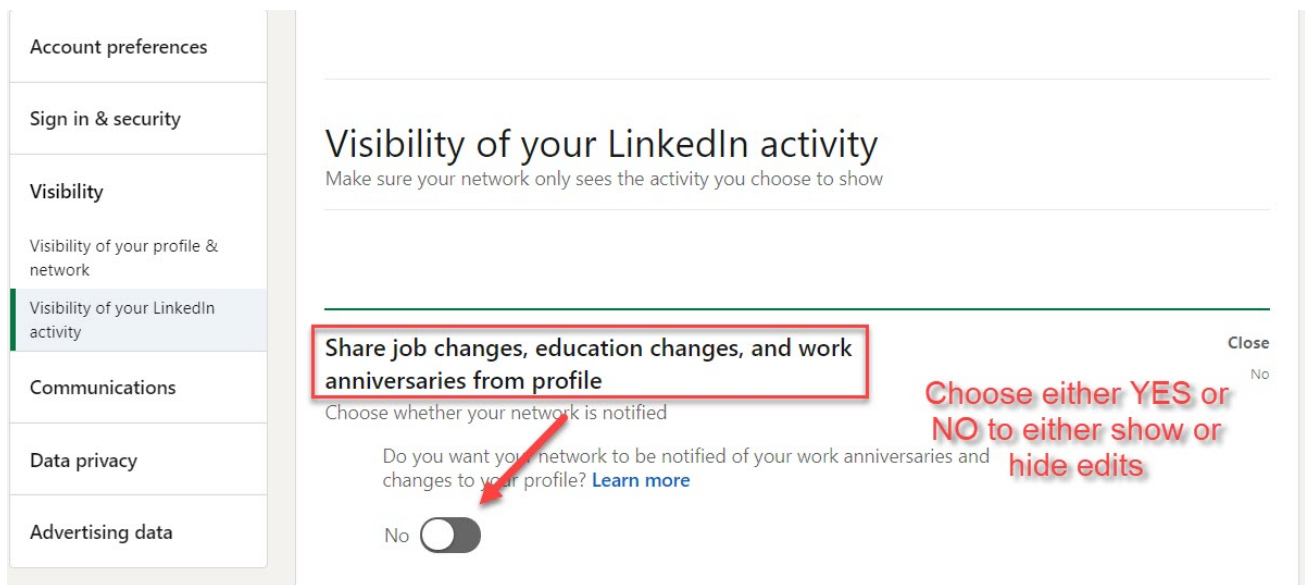
IMPORTANT! There's another key point that you need to be aware of. When you update certain areas of your profile ... and indeed do a load of other things around the LinkedIn site ... the system sends out a notification message to your 1st level connections to notify them of it.

So, if you are making a number of changes to your profile (perhaps having read this document) particularly to Current Work Experience or the Education areas, then these may be communicated to people you have connected with on the site and appear in the 'Updates' on their LinkedIn homepage.

To stop this happening - and stop them thinking that you are about to change job for example, which can be the case - then you need to turn off your "Sharing Profile Edits" on your 'Privacy & Settings' page. To do this, go to your Settings page via the "Me" element in the main menu bar and then choose "Privacy & Settings" as shown below.



Then, go to the 'Visibility' menu section and choose 'Sharing Job Changes' as below.



With this turned off, you should now be able to make changes to your profile without broadcasting them to all of your connections. Do turn it back on again after you have finished as it's a great aid to continued visibility when you make certain changes or indeed if you wish to use it as a way of creating a little additional visibility when you add new services or roles.

Optimising your profile

All of these elements outlined below can be accessed and changed from the "Personal Profile page" on your account as shown above. On this page, you will see the 'blue pen' icons to show where editing can take place. Clicking on these icons will open a new 'pop-up' mini window with the relevant fields.

During the process, when you save the individual changes, what you see on page should be how your profile really looks on LinkedIn to those viewing it. The only area that isn't viewable by others is the area that LinkedIn calls your dashboard and contains information just seen by you.

Background Image

The first very obvious element is the large banner which you should have as an option is you decide to add it - this was previously a Premium account option but has been available to all members for many years now.

For best effect, you should upload your own - it is the perfect first visual element to your profile and so we need to be using it accordingly. An image which is representative of your company and its products or services is one route to take and one that will help the branding aspect no end but there is a myriad of options according to what you want to get across.

The image should be 1584 x 396 from a size perspective to get the best results according to LinkedIn. You should be aware that certain sections of the image are going to be hidden behind your main profile areas, so you might like to choose / adjust your image to work with that.

You might also like to consider that 60% of page views are done through mobile devices which pulls through a different part of the background image as well, so if you can create something which will pander to all of these requirements then that would be great.

To edit your own background image, look to the top right-hand side of the Profile page and then click on "pen icon" link you'll find there:

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#OPENTOHELP

Upcoming Sessions:

- 4 x 1 hour Mentoring Programme [Sept start]
- 2 hour - Jumpstart your LinkedIn [Sept 4th]
- 4 hour - Using LinkedIn for Business Success [Sept 7th start]

Helping you to reach your business goals by using LinkedIn effectively

Access your banner from either place

Add profile section More...

Top part of your profile

Moving on to the first section at the top of your profile, points 1 - 5 below can all be edited by clicking on the "pen icon" at the top of the page as well.

In this part of the admin area, you will then be able to change several the key elements that appear in the top part of the profile.

Edit intro

English Spanish

MARK WHITE
THE LINKEDIN PROFESSIONAL

Helping my clients to use LinkedIn more effectively. Increasing sales & improving account development and inbound marketing effectiveness

First Name * Last Name *

Mark White

Headline *

Independent LinkedIn Trainer - Helping businesses use LinkedIn more effectively for Sales, Marketing & HR since 2009

Current Position *

Independent LinkedIn Trainer & Consultant at Linked Training (Independent LinkedIn Training & Coach)

Education *

Cranfield School of Management

☒ Show above education in my intro

Country/Region * ZIP code

United Kingdom nr1

Locations within this area

Norwich, United Kingdom

Industry *

Professional Training & Coaching

1. Your Name

It might seem a little ridiculous to have to mention it, but just use your name here (... please! ...) without any fancy additions of phone numbers or email addresses that some people seem intent on including. It's against the LinkedIn Terms and Conditions to do anything else but, more importantly, if you do add other elements then you run the risk of having your account restricted and even potentially prejudiced in the internal search results if they feel that you are trying to "game" the system.

There is also the impact of making your profile seem a little "tacky" in many people's eyes - something you want to avoid at all costs, particularly when you are looking to make a positive first impression. There are lots of other ways to ensure that you are easily contactable and visible, so there's really no need to risk making unnecessary additions to the "name" field.

2. Photo

You need to include a photo. Seriously. It personalises the profile right from the outset, something that is a key element in any business where you need to differentiate yourself ... and I'd hazard a guess that we all want to achieve that. It also gives people a visual image to associate with the text, which is how we tend to best remember information. If you decide not to, you may find that people will wonder why you haven't got a picture - do you have something to hide? The likelihood is "no, you haven't" so don't let that thought even enter their head!

In addition, you will find that people will increasingly "look you up" ahead of meetings or networking events and such like. Having a recent and professional photo means you will be easier to find and, if people have singled you out to talk to, then make sure they CAN find you!

Finally, it will help you to get found in the LinkedIn search results. Do a search and check the results - I guarantee that if there are people without a photo in the results, you'll only look at them after those with a photo. It's simply the case that our eyes are drawn to images first rather than text. Even more so here because we are searching for people in this instance, so we are "looking" for a face when the results appear.

So, if you've got yourself on the first page of results for a key term that you want to be found for, don't then give that advantage away simply because you haven't added a photo. Equally, don't get tempted to put up your company logo or a cartoon type avatar - again partly so you don't fall foul of LinkedIn's Ts & Cs, but also for all of the same reasons stated above.

3. Headline

This is a key part on the profile, so take time to get it right - in fact, if you are going to focus on one text element on your profile, then this is probably the one. You currently have 220 characters at your disposal but use them properly and they can have a real impact.

The Professional Headline (or now just "Headline") follows you around the site (alongside your name and in most cases your photo) - when you appear in search results, that's what the searcher sees; when you look at their profile, that's what they see; when you post in

a Group, that's what they see. However, unless you change it, it defaults to show your latest job title at your latest company which in most cases will not leave them any the wiser about what you offer and what you do.

So, rather than leaving it like that, I would recommend that you develop it and include some of the keywords that you would like people to describe you with (and find you for) - perhaps your area of expertise, the industry that you specialise in, the geographic area that you cover or other such elements - essentially anything which will help people identify that you and your company are the people they should be dealing with. Think of it as a "3 second elevator pitch" if you prefer.

Alternatively, turn in around - present the benefits here of working with you and show the WIIFM for the person reading your profile. That's "What's In It For Me" in case you weren't sure.

To add to the mix, the Professional Headline is also one of the key elements when it comes to ranking within the LinkedIn internal search. [I wrote a post on the options which you may find interesting at <http://www.linkedintraining.net/linkedin-profile-professional-headlines-which-work-for-you/>].

4. Location

Just enter the postcode of your work address and this will automatically display the location that LinkedIn finds for it - this is, however, dictated by the postcode and you cannot simply type in the town instead which can on occasions be problematic. Luckily, LinkedIn have been extending over and if you look just below where you have typed in the postcode, you will see a series of alternatives as "Locations within this area" where you can choose something appropriate.

If you do want to take it a stage further and particularly if you are not based within your geographic target market, then you might like to consider selecting a postcode which is centrally located to this market. The reason being that some companies, when using the advanced search to look for suppliers, will start locally so this will help to ensure that you are still there and visible to them.

5. Company Name and Education

These elements are now displayed on the right-hand side of your Personal Profile preceding the "Contact Info" and "Connections". If you have multiple current roles or educational establishments, then you can select which you want to appear here from the drop-down menus.

You can also now elect not to show anything with regards to your "Education" - untick the tick box and it will no longer pull anything from your Education section but instead leave it blank.

6. Industry

There is a pull-down menu which allows you to select your industry from the list provided. Keep it simple as people do search by industry in the Advanced Search and generally, I would keep this to the industry you work in rather than the industry you may be targeting.

It is information though that, although it is still searchable using the search filters, is not displayed on your Profile page which is all a little weird. Nevertheless, I would encourage

you to keep it up to date and accurate because it might always make a return.

7. About

The About section gives you a space of free text to talk a little about yourself - you get some 2600 characters, so use them. Perhaps start with a short paragraph at the top about your company but then move on to saying something about yourself.

If you want to get it read, then try to tell a “story” rather than simply repeat the elements that already appear in the section relating to your jobs. As you do so, use the first person rather than “he” or “she” - think of it more in the form of introducing yourself at a networking event rather than simply regurgitating information from a CV.

In addition, I would also encourage potentially getting a call to action included as well with contact details (should you wish to broadcast them) - email and contact phone number are sensible additions in my opinion though do remember that these will be in the public domain.

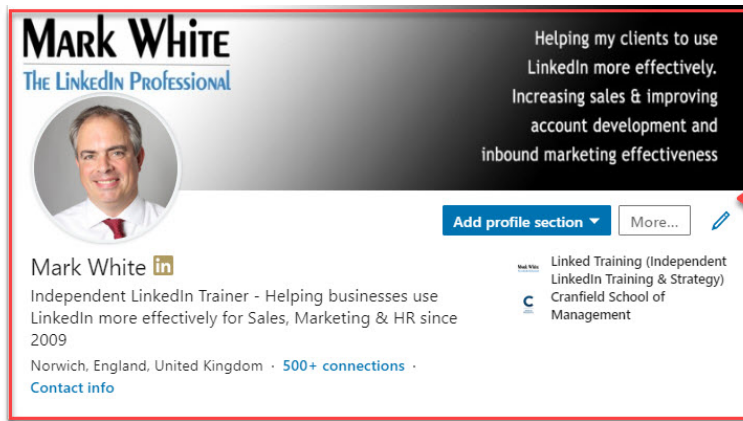
IMPORTANT: The new layout now gives the ‘About’ section a new twist - it is very much part of the introduction to the rest of the profile but, importantly, you only get to see the first three lines of text (approximately 310 characters) and then the option to “see more”. It is therefore vitally important to get across a first key message here or perhaps an encouragement to click and read the rest.

If you wish to be even more precise, then also consider the mobile environment for this aspect as well as only 90 characters show “above the fold” and so that might be another element to consider.

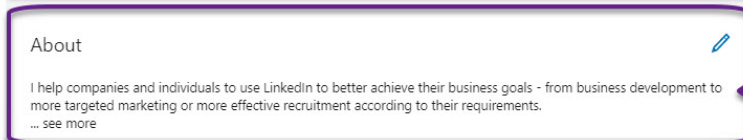
The other change is that the ability to highlight some of the Rich Media items by including them in your About section has now been taken away, and in many ways enhanced, by adding them to the Featured section. The Rich Media options still exist as part of the Work Experience and are dealt with in section 14 below.

8. Featured

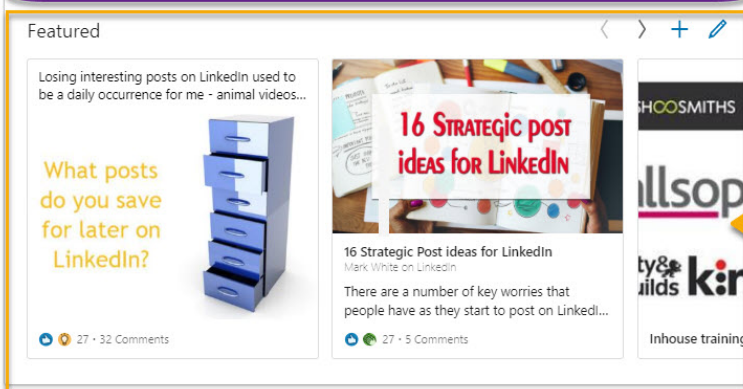
This is a relatively new section and a great place to highlight posts and articles, or add images, documents and links to external resources should you wish. It sits underneath the About section and, in all honesty, dwarfs it somewhat in its current format.



Introduction Card:
Key 1st set of
"hello" information



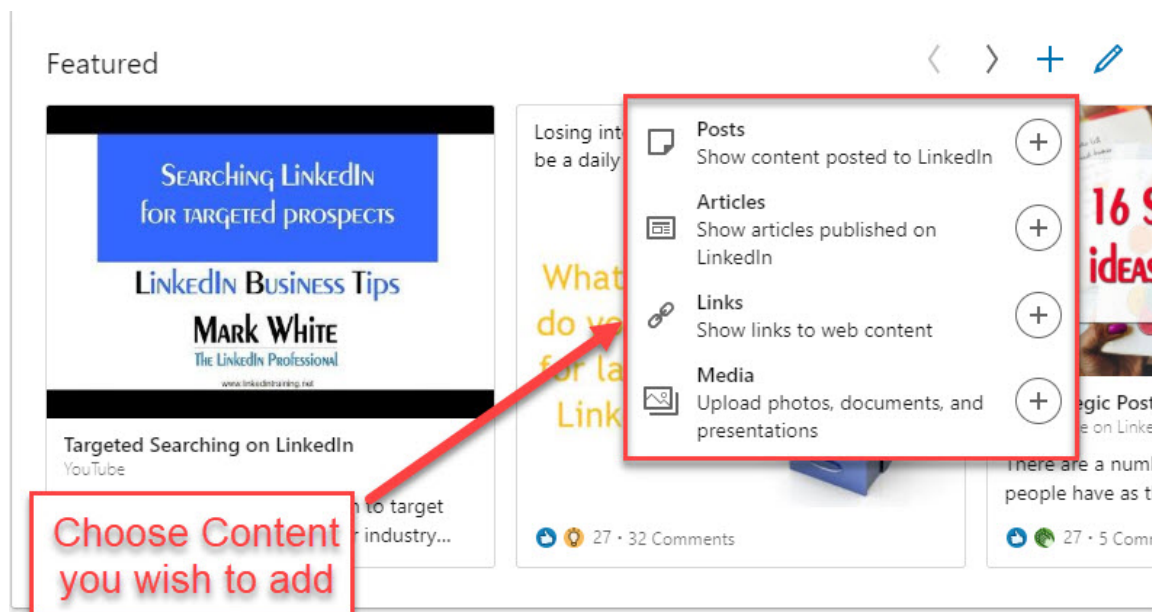
About section:
What can I do,
How can I help &
What do I offer



Featured Area:
Highlighting key
content and links

It's therefore key to make sure that you add in relevant elements so that they are highlighted and make sure that they are very visual in nature to make most effective use of this area.

To add details, the easiest way is to use the '+' sign in the top right hand corner and then select the type of content you wish to add.



You can also re-order and delete items, so there's a lot of control to be had.

Moving into the next section, there is additional key information held here that includes current position(s), education, Skills and Education.

9. Current Position(s)

a) Job Title

This is another key element to consider when it comes to the internal search on LinkedIn - essentially, the LinkedIn system currently places great store in the words that you use here. As they become past jobs, the emphasis does fade but is still important.

Because of this, try to add in some additional elements, perhaps including the specialisms you cover or your geographic coverage, whatever is relevant. I'd encourage you to avoid feeling obliged to simply repeat what is on your business card - your LinkedIn profile serves a different purpose, so we need to optimise accordingly. Rather than just leaving it, for example, as *Manager* or *Business Development* or *Consultant*, tell the visitors to your profile something more and help the search engine to rank you more highly into the bargain.

Following on from your Job Title, you then have the Description area where the 'meat' of the job information sits - again, you have the chance to make this area both useful in terms of the people who may look through it but also the internal search engines which will also be looking for keyword phrases here.

For the other members visiting your profile, start by adding context to what you do. I'd suggest that the first short paragraph is all about the company and what it does - that will give a greater understanding of your role which will follow and add in some key words into the bargain.

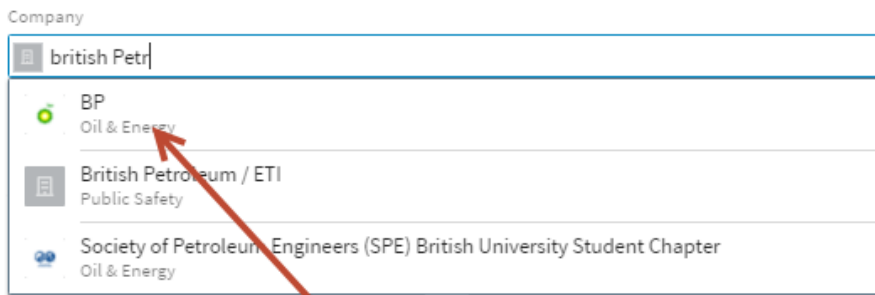
Follow this with an overview of what you do, perhaps adding a "Specialisms include:" and then listing some relevant keywords will allow you to pander to both 'audiences' as would a short list of some of the sectors that you specialise in or even a list of recent customers if appropriate. Think here of what your target audience would want to know - if you are looking to talk to new clients, for example, then what is going to make them stop ... sit up ... read further ... and then add you to their short list or even get in contact straight away.

That's the information that you are going to want to include here!

b) Company

It is important to link up with the right company and so please make sure that it is your company that you are linked to, as opposed to one with a similar name. Doing so ensures that your details are associated with the right company page and so your updates appear in the right information stream.

As you add a new company (or edit a current one) you will see that a drop-down menu appears displaying names of companies whose company pages already exist.



Select from the list that appears

You can check that this has happened successfully because the company logo will appear next to the company name on your own profile page.

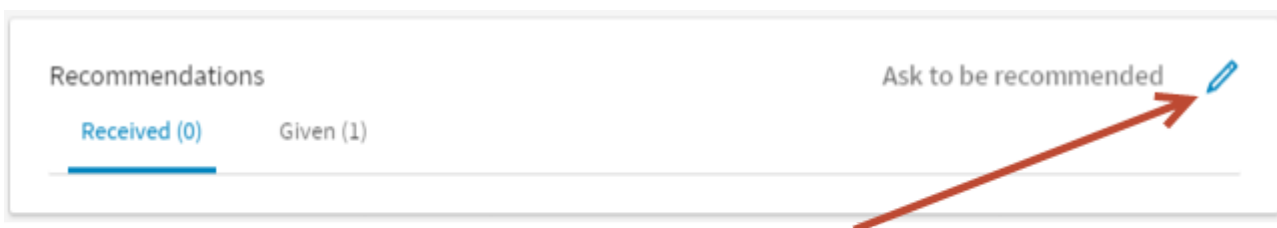
10. Recommendations & Endorsements

a) Recommendations (or testimonials if you prefer) are a very powerful tool as you are no doubt aware, so it's very worthwhile building them up, particularly from satisfied clients, though from line managers within your own company can also be relevant.

The visibility and positioning of the Recommendations has changed over time and currently sits below the Skills and Endorsements section - only the first two are displayed with a "see more" option to view the rest of them.

When looking for someone with certain skills and then comparing two profiles, if one has several recommendations outlining someone's qualities and the other is simply the person in question saying how good they are, then logic dictates you are likely to be swayed to side with the first.

On LinkedIn, you can only receive recommendations from 1st level connections and of course the "normal way" would simply be to contact the people you have done the work for directly and ask if they would recommend you. In addition, there is a way to request them via the site - you currently need to go to the 'Recommendations' section and then choose the 'Ask to be Recommended' option on the right-hand side of the page:



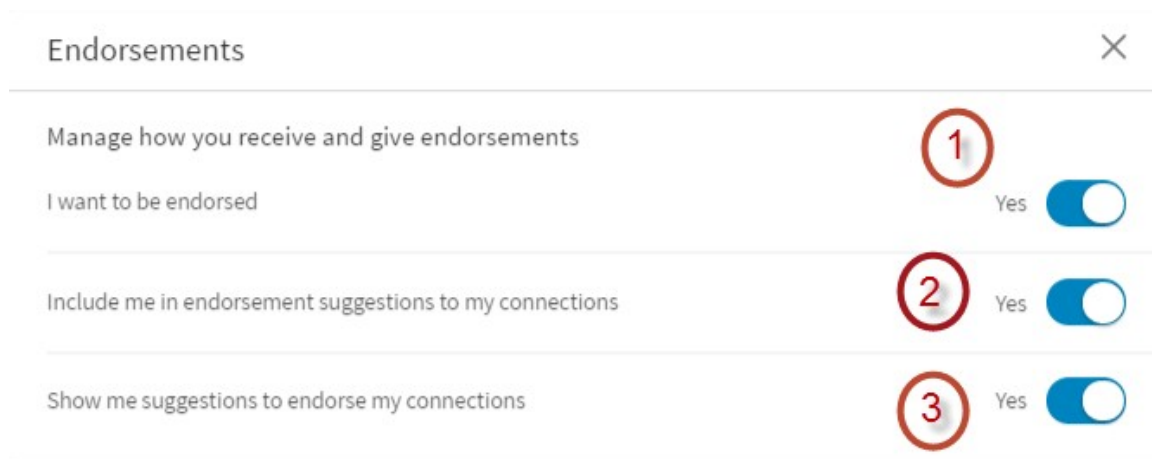
Request, accept & give recommendations

Requesting recommendations may not feel comfortable to everyone, but they are a great way of showing how other people view you and your services rather than simply how you present yourself. So, after you have done a great job, why not ask them to give you a recommendation for it?

b) Endorsements are the younger and (in my opinion) the poorer brother of recommendations - they are an easy way for people to register their approval for skills that you have on your profile and ones that LinkedIn pushes people towards every time that they visit your profile.

My issue remains that I feel that they are too easily gamed - however, they are now part and parcel of the site and there will be people who use them as a reference point to potentially differentiate between two similar suppliers. So, make sure that you do add 5 - 6 skills to your profile and let LinkedIn push them for you - once they have 10 endorsements against them, add 5 more where appropriate and this will develop this aspect but give you control of them at the same time.

If, however, this is simply not for you, then LinkedIn now allows you to switch off elements of the "Endorsement experience". On your "profile" page, if you go down to the Skills & Endorsements section and click on the 'edit' / pencil icon, and at the bottom you will see the opportunity to "Adjust endorsement settings" which gives you the following options:



Endorsements	
Manage how you receive and give endorsements	
I want to be endorsed	1 Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Include me in endorsement suggestions to my connections	2 Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Show me suggestions to endorse my connections	3 Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. This allows you to hide the Skills & Endorsements section so that it doesn't appear at all on your Profile. While I'm not a great fan of Endorsements, given the "TripAdvisor" type environment we live in, people feel reassured when they see others have essentially give you a thumbs up for certain skills, so I would leave this on unless you feel strongly otherwise.

2. People are encouraged to endorse you and LinkedIn can send out messages to encourage this and will often make a box appear with suggested skills to endorse when 1st level connections visit your page - turning this off should stop both of these practices.

3. Conversely, when you visit other connections' profiles, you are asked to endorse them. You now have the opportunity to turn off that function - it doesn't mean that you can no longer endorse people, simply that you won't be "encouraged" to do so any more.

This hopefully will now provide the extra degree of control that many users are looking to have over the whole process.

11. Public profile

While all of this editing happens on the profile that exists within your LinkedIn account and determines the content that appears on the profile people see when they are logged into the site, you do in fact have a 2nd LinkedIn profile - your Public Profile.

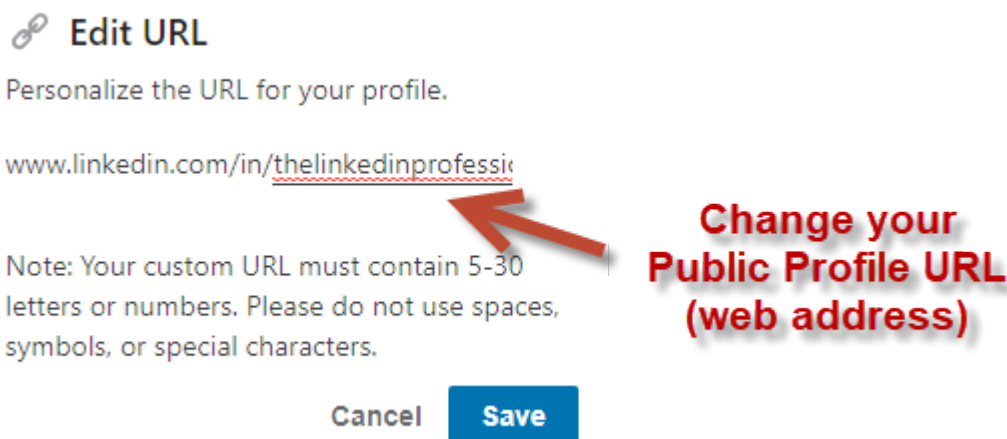
This is the profile that is visible outside of the LinkedIn site and the one that appears in Google's search results for example. It is created directly from the information you type into your internal profile but has a slightly different appearance and, in addition, you do have control over which elements actually appear there - including none at all if you so wish, although I would seldom recommend it.

To edit this information, click on the "Edit Public Profile & URL" link in the top right hand corner of your Profile page.

The first thing to consider is that you can change the name of your Public Profile URL (or name location) from a string of numbers which includes your name to something shorter and much more usable which you can more easily direct people to it. In most instances, this will just be your name although, if that is already taken, you might like to add in your middle initial for example, or perhaps tag 'onlinkedin' or 'profile' at the end in order to differentiate it.

In general, I would advise against adding your company name (unless it is your own company) for the simple reason that most people change companies at some point, and it would be better not to change your Public Profile URL once you have customised it.

This can be changed by clicking the *edit* link next to your Public Profile name and then on the right hand side at the bottom you will have the option to modify it.



You then have control over what actually appears on the Public Profile using a series of tick boxes - this does not allow you to change the actual words which are pulled directly from your main profile, but it gives you the chance to decide which of the sections you do and do not wish to display.

Because we want anyone visiting your Public Profile to either visit your full Profile on LinkedIn or to click on the website links that you have included, then what I would recommend is outlined in the image below:

Your profile's public visibility
On

Basic (required)

☒ Name, number of connections, industry, and region

Profile Photo

☐ Your connections
Only LinkedIn members directly connected to you.

☐ Your network
Only LinkedIn members connected up to three degrees away from you.

☐ All LinkedIn Members

☒ Public
All LinkedIn members, and others who find you via search engines and other services

Headline Show

Websites Show

Posts & Activities Show

Summary Show

Current Experience Show

Details Show

Past Experience Hide

Education Show

Details Show

Skills Show

Certifications Hide

Languages Hide

Projects Hide

Recommendations Show

The next 2 elements now sit on the right-hand side of your profile at the top in the 'Contact Info' section of your profile which you can reveal by clicking on the "pen icon" at the top of the main section or by clicking on the 'Contact Info' words themselves.

12. Websites

You are given three "slots" on your profile where you can link to external websites or individual pages. This is now housed on the right-hand side of your profile and accessed from the "Edit contact info" area where you can also add phone number, IM (Instant Messenger) options etc.

I would recommend that the first link is directed at the homepage of your website - the others could be directed at your blog if you run one, other individual pages within the site which contain particular content that you want to highlight perhaps with downloads, promotions, weekly updates etc. or even directly at a document that you produce that you want to share from your site.

Remember that you don't need to leave the display name as "Company Website" - instead you should have something which is more descriptive to help visitors to your profile to know where they should be clicking. To do so, select "Other" from the pull-down list and it will create an additional box which you can fill in with your own text and it is this that will appear as the clickable link on your profile.

Edit contact info X

Website URL

Other

Type (Other)

+ Add website

Remove website

Choose "Other" to get the extra box where you can add text

12. Twitter

There used to be quite a close tie between LinkedIn and Twitter, however this has weakened considerably over recent time so that now you can no longer automatically post your Twitter updates to your LinkedIn account.

However, the facility still remains to share updates that you post on LinkedIn across to your Twitter account and in addition, display your Twitter accounts as part of the Contact Info on your LinkedIn Profile page.

ACCOUNTS

linkedinguys

[Remove] Everyone

BlogCoach

[Remove] Everyone

+ Add another Twitter account

SHARING TWEETS

Which Twitter account would you like to share from? linkedinguys

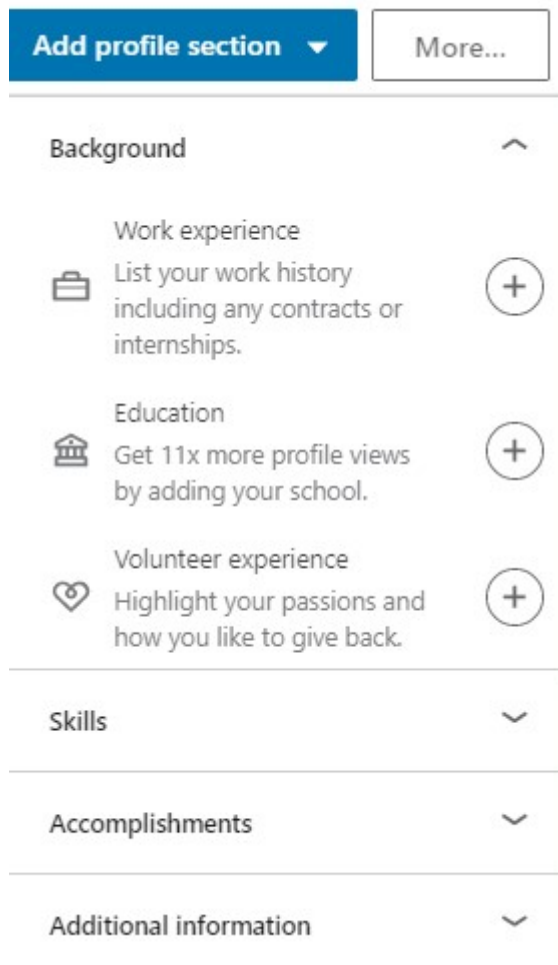
You can add your Twitter accounts directly from your 'Edit Profile' page and the only setting now open to you is which account you wish to share to, in the situation where you have more than one.

13. Projects, Publications, Languages etc.

There are a whole host of additional sections that you can add into your profile to expand the information that you provide, enhance your CV if you are using from a jobseeker's

perspective or to build in "calls to action" if you are coming at it more from a sales or marketing perspective.

The elements that you can add are listed below and now also appear on your "Profile page" in a section on the right-hand side with the headline of "Add a new profile section".



The image shows a screenshot of the LinkedIn 'Add profile section' dropdown menu. At the top, there is a blue button labeled 'Add profile section' with a downward arrow, and a white button labeled 'More...'. Below these buttons, the menu is organized into sections. The first section is 'Background', which is expanded and shows three options: 'Work experience' (with a briefcase icon and a plus button), 'Education' (with a school icon and a plus button), and 'Volunteer experience' (with a heart icon and a plus button). Below 'Background' are three collapsed sections: 'Skills', 'Accomplishments', and 'Additional information', each with a downward arrow.

The exact format will depend on the sections that you have already added to your profile:

- Projects
- Publications
- Languages
- Certifications
- Patents
- Organizations (Voluntary Work)
- Courses
- Honours and Awards
- Test Scores

By clicking on the '+' next to the relevant section, you will be able to add it to your profile

The particular relevance of each of these sections will depend very much on what you do but I'd recommend that you do complete the Skills section in particular. The reason for this another section that LinkedIn has introduced which is now allowing people to focus directly in on certain skill sets and you can have then 'endorsed' too.

While potentially annoying, a number of people are using this as an additional 'filter' when looking at potential partners or suppliers, so it is becoming important to build up endorsements for certain key skills.

A couple of other sections here that I think are worthy of a mention are "Projects" and the "Publications" - the main reason for this is the fact that in both cases you can create a header which then links to an external web page. This means that, for example, if you have created a document that you wish to distribute, or you wish to refer people to a new element such as a product or service then you could add that in as a project and link it back to your website. It all adds to the flow of the profile and what you are able to offer.

14. Rich Media

Finally, one key element of the profile that still remains underused in my opinion is the so-called "Rich Media" solution from LinkedIn which allows you to display files from applications such as SlideShare as well as load up images or documents directly onto the site.

The opportunities are quite simply limitless and whether you wish to connect easily to YouTube or Vimeo (if you wish to display video on your profile), SlideShare for presentations or if you wish to display images or documents then you can upload them and go from there.

This is an excellent way to achieve additional visibility for key elements and also get a "stickier" profile which should in itself prove beneficial. It should also be something that is built into a Content Marketing strategy as it gives the perfect additional outlet in addition to the other benefits mentioned above.

The types of files that can be added include:

- * Images
- * Videos
- * Audio
- * Presentations
- * Documents and Brochures
- * Website pages

There is a list of suppliers that LinkedIn provides a relatively close connection and this is being increased - however, most file types can also be uploaded directly even if they aren't part of these primary applications.

The graphic element is the key part here and not just for those people looking to display their portfolio but also the perfect place to display a company overview, fully branded and with relevant information.

While you can add these into the Featured area, as mentioned earlier, you can also add Rich Media individually in two other sections of your Profile - a job in your Experience section and a university / course in your Education section. If you wish to add in new elements in the Experience or Education sections, then you will need to select the 'edit' icon next to the Role or Education that you wish to associate it with.

In both cases, at the bottom of the input box you will find:

Media

Add or link to external documents, photos, sites, videos, and presentations.

Upload

Link to media

Paste or type a link to a file or video

Add

[? Supported formats](#)

If you wish to upload an image or file, then clicking on the "Upload" button will allow you to choose from those on your PC.

Clicking on the "Link to Media" button gives you the option to paste or type a link to a file or to a video, as shown above. If you are looking to do so from YouTube, for example, then go to the video page on YouTube, click on the 'Share' button below and copy the page that it gives you. Now, in LinkedIn, just paste that into the box it gives you when you click on 'Link' and click 'Add' to insert the video on your profile.