

## Getting traction with your LinkedIn Profile

Your LinkedIn profile is discoverable through searches on search engines, such as Google, and on LinkedIn itself. [According to OminicareAgency.com](#) (2018) 90% of recruiters use LinkedIn regularly.

By promoting yourself through a great LinkedIn Profile you are more likely to get “found” when headhunters and recruiters conduct keyword searches for people with your skills and experience and most importantly result in an enquiry or approach regarding as yet unadvertised opportunities. If you are thinking of contracting yourself out in this day and age of the “gig” economy, LinkedIn can also be a useful sales tool to promote your services and products.

As your “pull” job search strategy your LinkedIn profile has a different purpose to your “push” strategy (your CV) and therefore although the messaging should be consistent and compelling, there are some key differences to consider when updating your LinkedIn profile.

Here are some of my top tips:

- 1 **Create some visual impact.** Unlike the first page of your CV, recruiters don’t get a chance to see a full page of keywords for a 10 second skim read. Change the banner from the default blue one. Keep it professional and make sure it compliments your **Professional Head and Shoulders** profile photo.



- 2 **Your headline.** Under your name you have the opportunity to add 123 characters with spaces that tell a compelling story about what you do and what you have to offer based on what you want next – not necessarily just your last job title and company which LinkedIn defaults to. Use these characters wisely – what key words, skills, functions etc are recruiters likely to be using to find you. Avoid negative sounding statements which don’t contain key words about your expertise such as “open to opportunities” or “currently seeking work”. There are other areas to let people know you are available, and headhunters still approach you whether you are currently employed or not.

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**3 About.** Many people leave this out – remember when your profile turns up in a keyword search the first couple of lines of the About section are visible. If compelling enough, then the viewer may decide to have a deeper look. Align this with the profile section of your CV but personalise it – talk to your audience in first person. Sell your expertise but also tell people what motivates you. Think of this as your elevator pitch. At the end invite readers to “contact” you via LinkedIn messaging (never include your personal phone or email here) for a “confidential discussion” on how you can help them. Once again don’t make this sound “desperate” – use the words “Open to discussing opportunities” and “available at short notice” rather than “looking for work” and “available immediately”

**4 Experience.** Your experience (career history) should be consistent with the content of your CV. There are limits to the number of words or characters you can put in each section so you may like to summarise your key tasks into a paragraph or two. Add in some achievements if you can as these are important, but be aware that competitors etc may be looking, as well as future employers so there could be some confidentiality issues if you supply numbers, turnover, percentages etc. This is ok in your CV as you “choose” who you send that to, but your LinkedIn profile is much more public.

**5 Education | Qualifications.** Add your tertiary qualifications/degrees or most important certification. By default your most recent one will be at the top of your profile, however you can move the most relevant or significant qualification to the top of the list if it is not your most recent by dragging and dropping which one you want to appear with your name and headline at the top of your Profile.

There are a variety of other sections to add in courses, certifications, projects and awards if needed. Remember, relevant qualifications, certifications and degrees can also be used by recruiters as key search words.

**6 Skills.** This section is critical and unlike your CV can contain up to 50 keywords. This section is essentially a database which is searched for keywords to match you against posted jobs and compare you to other candidates. These are what will help your profile appear at the “top of the list” when recruiters conduct a talent search.

For roles you are applying for, check out the key skills or requirements and add these to the list. Add your technical skills including similar skills which are worded differently such as “Account Management” and “Relationship Management” as you don’t know which of these the headhunter might be using for their search.

**7 Added Oomph – the icing on the cake. Recommendations.** A powerful addition to your LinkedIn profile. The writers of your recommendations can be past bosses, colleagues, direct reports, suppliers and/or customers. Verbal references will be checked too, but by having some recommendations on your LinkedIn profile (especially for more recent roles), you are making life a lot easier for those searching for you.

You can request recommendations from your contacts so choose two or three you know well who can write about your work ethic, skills and achievements. Try to get a cross section. If you wish to have a specific area of your work showcased ask for a written recommendation about that specifically when requesting it.

**Adding Additional Sections.** There are a host of additional sections which can be added in if appropriate. Check out the sections under the “Add new profile section” on the right-hand side bar of the “My Profile” view.