



## Checkpoint 2

# Crafting a compelling LinkedIn profile

At the end of this checkpoint, you will:

- Understand LinkedIn profile development best practices for career changers.
- Complete each section of your LinkedIn profile using the tips you'll learn.
- Submit your LinkedIn profile URL to our Profile Developer for review.

Your LinkedIn profile is an online version of your resume. It's better designed, follows a standardized format, and doesn't have the rigid space restrictions of a resume, but the purpose of your LinkedIn profile is the same: to convert applications into phone screens. A well-crafted LinkedIn profile makes it easy for a company to invest more time in you as an applicant, and if you do a particularly good job, you may find it

even drives recruiters to reach out to you directly. Additionally, complete profiles are 40x more likely to receive opportunities.

Let's break your profile down into sections and then tackle each one.

## Basic Info

The top of your profile contains a summary of your info including your name, title, location, and education. The element that you have the most control over is your title. You aren't required to use the title of your current job. In fact, you want to choose a title that matches the job you want, rather than the job you have. Be as specific as possible without being so specific that you miss out on opportunities you're interested in. Some suggestions include:

- Software Developer
- Software Engineer
- Web Developer
- Front-end Developer
- Back-end Developer
- Full-stack Developer
- DevOps Engineer

## Photo

Yes, your photo matters. It's worth having a professional quality photograph here that you can reuse elsewhere (like your GitHub profile, AngelList profile, even your portfolio site), so look into and consider

professional photographers if you don't have a high-quality, recent photo on hand. Keep in mind that a good photo involves a few factors (e.g., well lit, not pixelated, you're smiling).

For more details and advice, you can read these [guidelines directly from LinkedIn](#) or watch this video [“How to take a great profile photo”](#) (YouTube).

## Contact Info

This section is easy to overlook and many people only include their email address. Be sure to take advantage and include a link to your portfolio site, your GitHub profile, and any other social accounts you'd like companies to see. If you're linking to something from your portfolio or resume, it probably belongs here too.

### Outline

## Summary

Your summary is where you'll have the most control over how you position yourself and how a user thinks about you. Are you the former technical support person, or are you a web developer with expertise in hardware and networking? Are you a marketer-turned-developer, or are you a full stack web developer who understands the growth challenges small- and medium-sized businesses face? This is your chance to control your story.

Hopefully, you have a well-crafted summary section on your resume to use as a starting point. This section should:

- Position you for the job you want, not the job you have
- Summarize your skills and your particular expertise

- Make it crystal clear exactly how you will add value to a company
- Include key language that screams “developer”
- Present you as a fun person who’s easy to get along with and works well on a team
- Communicate your personality and interests so the user remembers who you are
- Mentions of recent impressive projects/links to check out for more info

You have a bit more room here than on your resume, but you still can’t afford to waste space or lose someone’s attention. Start it off by it being short, sweet, and concise, in case folks don’t read past the first sentence. However, from there, feel free to add more of a personal touch so those who do read, get a real sense of what you’re all about!

## Outline

Here’s an example: *Full stack JavaScript developer with experience using Mongo/Node/Express/React to build web apps. Also experienced in business intelligence, data modeling, and report design on the SAP HANA platform.* \*\* [If they click on read more...]

*\*\*My name is [XXXX] and I tend to flex my right-brain muscles more often than not. In the fifth grade, I took a bunch of old women's magazines, clipped them up and created a student newsletter because our class didn't have one. It was poorly constructed, stapled together on wide-ruled loose-leaf notebook paper, but it became super popular; so much so that other students in my class started creating their own zines to compete with me. My fifth-grade teacher was astonished by the engagement and told me that I was an "innovative" 10-year-old that*

*should hold on tight to her creative skills. She also let me skip gym class so that I could start producing the class newsletter with Microsoft Word. Shout out to ClipArt.*

*\*\*Fast forward several years and I am still on a mission to create bigger, better (and more useful) things. Over the past five years, I've learned to code, launched an online magazine that received funding from angel investors, and enhanced my digital marketing toolbox. Some might say that I just like to keep myself busy; I say that there's a method to the madness.*

*\*\*I am a digital media entrepreneur, marketer and full-stack web developer who lives at the intersection of technology, art, and content creation. I currently work in marketing for one of the world's largest technology companies and spend my time outside the office empowering women through my digital platform, mentoring and service work.*

*\*\*Connect with me if your girl power is on fleek, you want to diversify the tech industry, or you're interested in building awesome and impactful partnerships that produce measurable results.*

*\*\*Specialties: digital marketing, growth hacking, SEO, content creation, blogging, web design, full-stack web development, HTML, CSS, Javascript, PHP, Ruby, Ruby on Rails, JQuery, Bootstrap, AngularJS, ReactJS, Wordpress, Drupal, UX/UI Design, Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign), design principles, color theory, wireframing, digital media*

## Experience

You can list your time at Thinkful under the experience section rather than under education, especially if you weren't working during the program. However, be sure that you do not list yourself as an employee as that can lead to a lot of confusion on the employer side. The description for each job should match the bullet points on your resume. You should describe your work by quantifying your accomplishments whenever possible, rather than by listing your responsibilities.

Speaking of the resume - it's okay to have some differences between your resume and your LinkedIn profile, but they shouldn't be so different that they confuse hiring managers. Your LinkedIn profile can be more comprehensive and your resume should be more targeted. Of course, job titles and employment dates should remain consistent between both your resume and your LinkedIn. Make sure that you're cross-referencing them so that you are not contradicting yourself. Make sure accurate details like start month/year of experiences are consistent.

While it's true you have more room for detail here than on your resume, that doesn't mean a recruiter's attention is infinite. Keep your descriptions short and sweet. Don't load your profile with tons of detail on positions you left a decade ago.

## How to Include Thinkful

Your best strategy is to list Thinkful as Experience (as an apprenticeship or listed as personal projects) instead of Education since it will stand out more and frankly, it IS more like experience than education.

## Education

Include any college degrees you have as well as your Thinkful/Bloc education, but don't use the word “bootcamp” in your description for Thinkful/Bloc. Hiring managers and recruiters sometimes use a negative search term to filter out bootcamp grads, and we want you to at least get through to the first round so you can shine!

## Projects

If you did not include your capstone projects in the Experience section, you can add a Projects section to display the projects you're proud of. Adding these helps position you as a web developer. You should be able to take the descriptions directly from your portfolio site, resume, or Angel List profile.

Which projects should you include and which should you exclude? As a general rule, you should include 2-5 projects, depending on what you're most proud of and the skills you want to communicate. Do not include any cookie-cutter or tutorial projects (e.g. JavaScript30 exercises), or any projects that would make you look like a beginner. Professional quality work only.

## Skills

Recruiters generally don't pay much attention to the skills section. They know most of the endorsements are from our friends or people we've traded endorsements with. However, to rank higher in LinkedIn searches and against other candidates using the LinkedIn job search feature, you need to add as many skills as possible (the max allowed is 50).

- Remove irrelevant skills that label you as not a developer (think Microsoft Word, Baking, Filing) and outdated skills (think

ActionScript, Visual Basic).

- Add relevant skills so that you can rank higher in recruiter searches.
- Re-order your skills to place the most relevant ones (HTML/CSS, JavaScript, Node, React, Git) at the top.

There's some debate on whether or not skill endorsements are useful, but at a glance it makes you seem more credible, so connect with as many students and grads from Thinkful/Bloc that you can find. Once your new contact accepts your connection request, immediately go and endorse their skills. Usually, they will reciprocate the favor.

## Recommendations

As an unproven developer, having someone vouch for you is incredibly valuable. In order to graduate, your mentor needs to endorse you to demonstrate that you're ready to be a solid contributor to an engineering team. If your mentor is on LinkedIn, ask if they'll write a recommendation for you and be sure to return the favor.

Similarly, if there is anyone you've collaborated on a project with or who can speak to your professional skills, ask them if they'd consider recommending you publicly.

## Connections

The more connections you have, the easier it is for you to get introductions into a company and the easier it is for recruiters and hiring managers to find your profile. Reach out to connect with former and current colleagues, other people you've met in the Thinkful community,



and classmates from undergrad. As you're making additional connections on LinkedIn, endorse people for the skills you know they have and ask if they'd be willing to return the favor.

Then, see who LinkedIn suggests you connect with. Go to [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) and look to the top right for a "People you may know" element. If you don't see that element, you may need to click through and clear the notifications there first. Check out [this video from LinkedIn on how to make connections](#) (YouTube).

## How to Attract Recruiters

In addition to all of the above, there is a setting that actually alerts recruiters that you are open to opportunities. [Check out this slide deck to learn how](#) or watch "[How to Indicate to Recruiters You Are Open to New Opportunities on LinkedIn](#)" (YouTube).

## Additional Tips & Resources

- [LinkedIn Profile Checklist \(PDF from LinkedIn\)](#)
- [Customizing Your Public Profile URL](#)
- [Managing Your Account and Privacy Settings - Overview \(from LinkedIn\)](#)
- [New LinkedIn Privacy Setting \(Protect Your Profile from Microsoft Resume Assistant\)](#)
- [Make LinkedIn profile changes without notifying your network \(video, links out to YouTube\)](#)

- 5 Templates That'll Make Writing the Perfect LinkedIn Summary a Breeze
- Contacting a Hiring Manager on LinkedIn

## Assignment

Submit a link to your LinkedIn profile below.

From here your profile will be submitted to one of our professional profile developers who will work with you through two rounds of edits. Please ensure that you complete this as soon as possible as this is a requirement for graduation.

### Outline

## Checkpoint

Submit your ideas or a link to your work here and use it as a conversation starter during your next mentor session.

This checkpoint will not be graded, but is still required.

Share your ideas here...

**\*\*bold\*\*** *\_italic\_* ``code`` > quote - bullet list

Preview

Submit Your Work

[Report a typo or other issue](#)

Next checkpoint

[Go to Overview](#)

Outline