



BRANDSTAND BLUEPRINT:

A REFRESHING GUIDE TO
LINKEDIN BRAND EXCELLENCE

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SUMMER 2023

A QUICK NOTE FROM LIAM

Thanks for downloading this guide to LinkedIn branding excellence. It has been years in the making (literally - started writing this in 2020, just never put it out there).

It's pretty surreal to think that there are people out there who want to know how I think about building a brand on LinkedIn because I'm just a regular suburban dad who found myself hanging out on LinkedIn a lot during the pandemic as a way to feed my extroversion while cooped up inside with my wife, a toddler, and an infant.

What started as mere fascination eventually became a passionate hobby, then a side hustle, and [now my full-time gig](#).

If you had asked me then if 35,000 people would follow me on LinkedIn and that my content would generate ~23,000,000 impressions, ~600,000 reactions, and ~100,000 comments, I would have straight up laughed in your face. If I had to buy ads for that kind of traction, it would have cost me ~\$700,000 at a (modest) \$30 CPM.

Alas, here we are.

Truth is, I don't care much about vanity metrics. Sure, it's nice to know people appreciate the content I create, but the REAL magic of this platform is the community and the ability for anyone - and I mean anyone - to create connection and opportunity.

I often say:

- LinkedIn isn't a social media platform
- LinkedIn is a serendipity manifestation platform.

Yes, it's a bit cheesy. Yes, it's a mouthful. But it's 100% true.

LinkedIn is the world's largest networking event, and it's open 24/7/365 with no geographic limitations. The community is kind, supportive, intelligent, and eager to connect with others and build relationships. I often quote W.B. Yeats when talking about it: "there are no strangers here, only friends you haven't yet met."

I firmly believe that because I know it to be true. Investing in my presence on this platform has quite literally been life changing in the best way possible. I commend you for investing in yours.

I hope you find the following pages insightful and valuable (please do share your feedback!)

If I can ever be of help on your LinkedIn brand building journey, [you know where to find me](#).

LINKEDIN 101: Create a Great Profile

THREE TIERS OF PROFILE CATEGORIES

LinkedIn offers members many ways to create a custom-tailored profile that meets their needs. When you click “edit” to begin creating a profile, you’ll notice that LinkedIn breaks down the various sections you can include into three distinct buckets:

❖ **Core, which LinkedIn considers the basics to be discovered by recruiters and people you may know. They include:**

- Education
- Positions you’ve held
- Career breaks

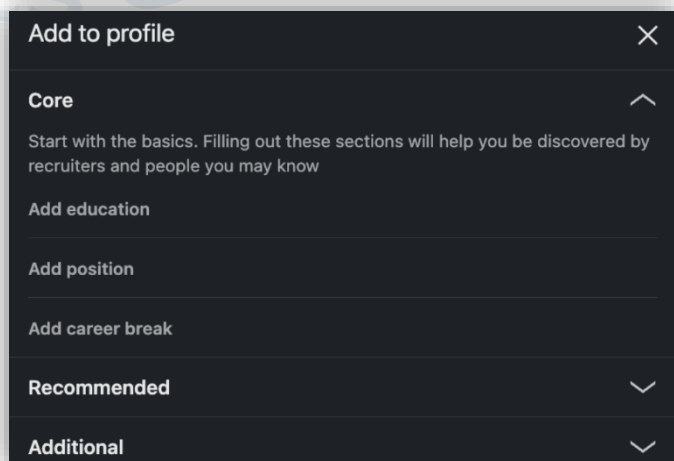
❖ **Recommended: completing these sections increase your credibility and give you access to more opportunities. They include:**

- Featured section
- Licenses & certifications
- Projects
- Courses
- Recommendations

❖ **Additional: adds even more personality to your profile. LinkedIn says these sections will help you grow your network and build even more relationships. They include:**

- Volunteer experience
- Publications
- Patents
- Honors & awards
- Test scores
- Languages
- Organizations
- Causes

We’ll dive into each section throughout this document, but it’s important to consider how LinkedIn compartmentalizes the various sections of a profile before you begin.



Profile Introduction

PROFILE PICTURE

Your profile picture is one of the most important things about your LinkedIn profile. This may seem obvious, but I'm still amazed by how many people leave it empty.

LinkedIn is the largest online reputation platform in existence where authenticity & trust are essential to building meaningful relationships. Without a picture, people won't take you seriously.

Many people overthink the headshot. It doesn't have to be a glamorous, professionally photographed image. It just needs to be a clear picture of your face on a flat background.

Here are some additional do's & don'ts for your profile picture:

DO:

- Be intentional. Have someone take pictures of you with the explicit intent of posting it to LinkedIn rather than trying to find some picture of yourself that already exists.
- Have a plain backdrop that will accentuate your face, not distract from it.
- SMILE! You don't have to smile, but why on earth wouldn't you? It's what humans do best. It says, "Hey! I'm approachable! Let's connect!"
- Be yourself / look natural. There's no point trying to be anything you're not.
- Make sure your face takes up a good portion of the space allotted, as oftentimes your profile picture will be sitting next to a comment you leave, which is small real estate.

DO NOT:

- Leave your profile photo blank
- Use a photo that is of low or poor quality
- Use a selfie. C'mon, I know you have a friend who can take a picture of you.
- Use a photo that is something you wouldn't want to be caught looking at in the office.
- Scowl or look otherwise unapproachable.

BANNER

Once you've got a nice profile picture in place, create a LinkedIn banner that differentiates you from the hundreds of millions of people who are content to just leave the boilerplate banner that comes with every profile.

Why have this?



When you could have something that looks more like this?




BANNER #1 tells people absolutely nothing about the person, except that they don't really care all that much about their LinkedIn profile or personal brand. Not a great first impression.

BANNER #2 isn't exactly art, but it effectively conveys what I want visitors to my profile to recognize immediately:

1. The name of my company
2. The Link to my website
3. The services I provide
4. Follow & "ring the notification bell" calls-to-action (CTAs).

You want people to be intrigued by your profile banner and welcome them to continue learning more about you, follow and/or connect with you.


Here are some other examples of really great banners around LinkedIn:



moonbound


Your Journey to Web3 Success Starts Here

Tokenomics, Strategy & More



in

🔔



Web3 Doers


ARE YOU READY TO GROW IN THE WEB3 SPACE WITH WEB3 DOERS?

JOIN OUR FREE COMMUNITY TODAY!


NEVER MISS MY POSTS!

TRUSTED BY 700+ WEB3 COMPANIES INCLUDING

cookie3 x EXCLUSIBLE tropee SmartToken YON



🔔



THE HIGH PERFORMANCE JOURNAL


JOIN 130,000+ SUBSCRIBERS GETTING ONE HIGH PERFORMANCE TIP EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

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EMMY AWARD • GOOGLE AWARD • APP STORE AWARD • WEBBY AWARD • WINNING PRODUCT STUDIO

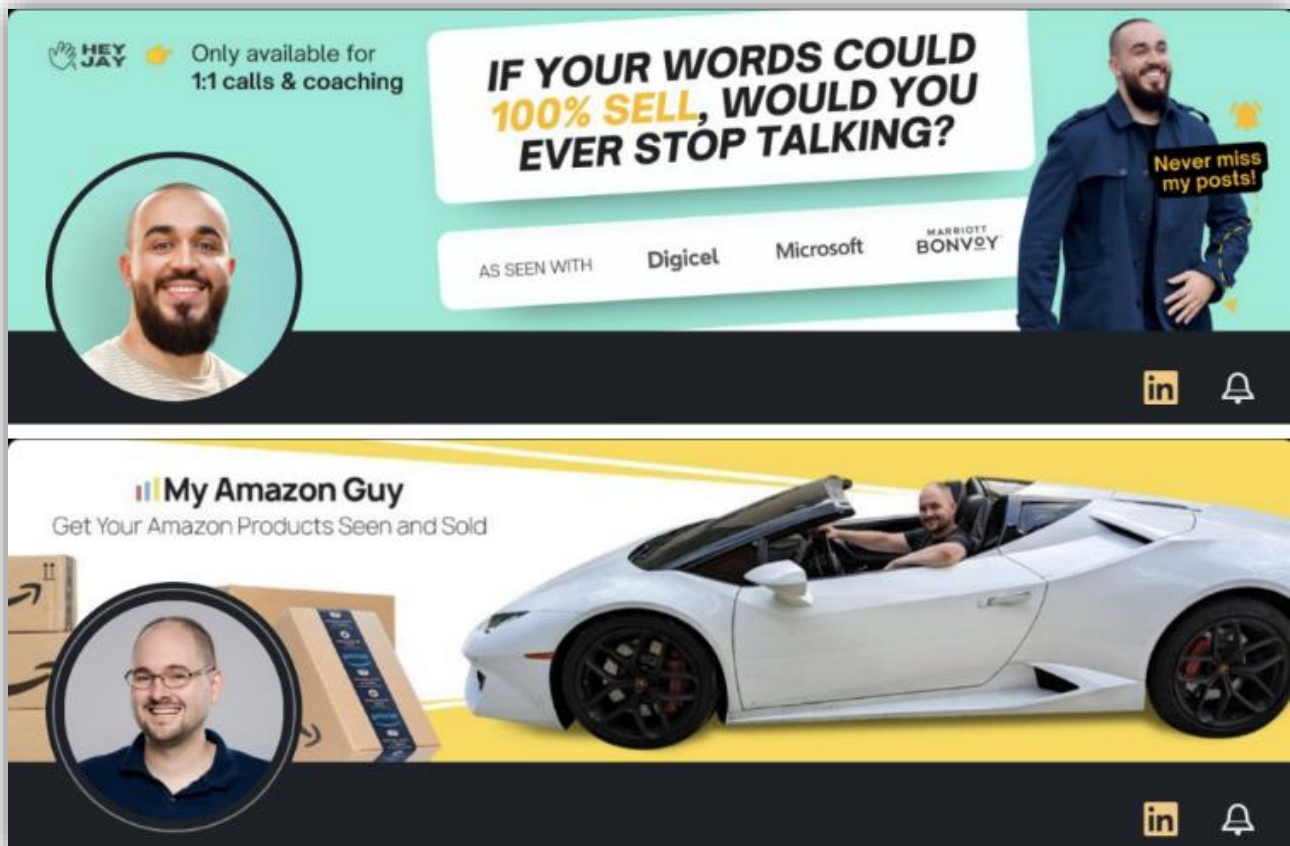


POLYFORM STUDIO

♥ CVS Nike Disney RTFKT Red Bull

in

🔔



You don't have to be a design professional or hire someone to create your banner. Just head over to [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) where you can choose from hundreds of customizable banner templates or create your own. The dimensions of a LinkedIn banner are 1400 x 425 pixels should you decide to create one on your own.

RECORDING NAME PRONUNCIATION

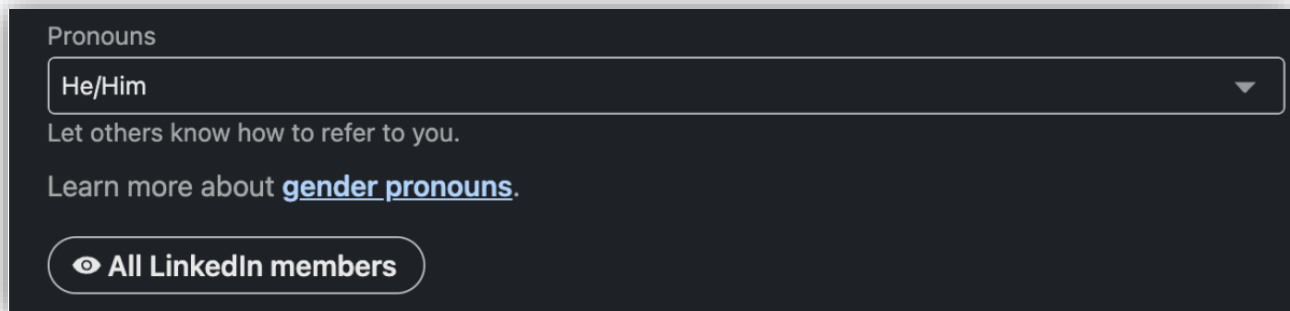
LinkedIn lets you record the pronunciation of your name so that anyone curious to know how to say it can figure that out. Of course, you don't HAVE to limit the recording to just your name, which presents an opportunity to get a bit creative with this little easter egg they've embedded.

Some people have been known to play songs, others include discount codes to products or services they offer.



GENDER PRONOUNS

LinkedIn lets you list the gender pronouns to which they identify within your profile. You can also select whether only 1st degree-connections get to see it or all LinkedIn members.



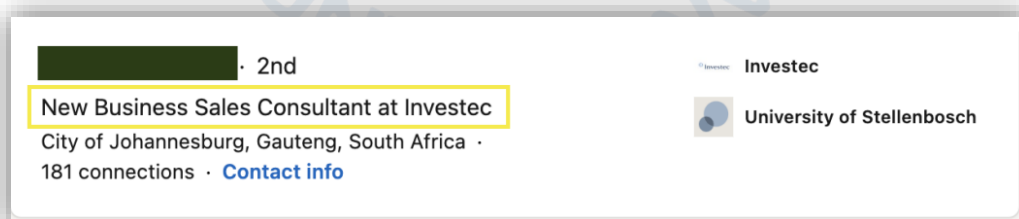
The screenshot shows the 'Pronouns' settings in a dark-themed interface. At the top, the word 'Pronouns' is displayed. Below it is a dropdown menu currently set to 'He/Him'. Under the dropdown, the text 'Let others know how to refer to you.' is visible. Further down, there is a link that says 'Learn more about [gender pronouns](#).' At the bottom of the menu is a button with an eye icon and the text 'All LinkedIn members'.

HEADLINE

Headlines are a hotly debated topic. LinkedIn gives you 220 characters to work with, but that doesn't mean you should use all of them. What is essential, however, is that the most important information you want people to know about you is reflected in the first 65-80 characters because that's the headline preview length LinkedIn shows on comments, and that's how most people will end up seeing your profile. Make them want to click on it!

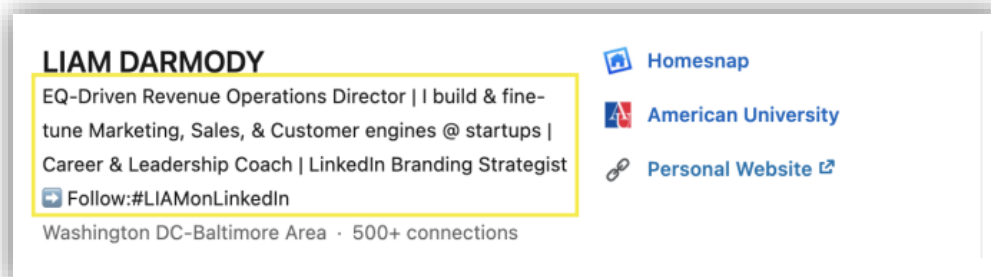
I've noticed three common approaches to headlines.

The first is what I call "The Strictly Business Headline," which combines your title & company name. It's very basic and to-the-point, displaying your title and employer. It's also the default headline provided by LinkedIn, which means the majority of people have it.

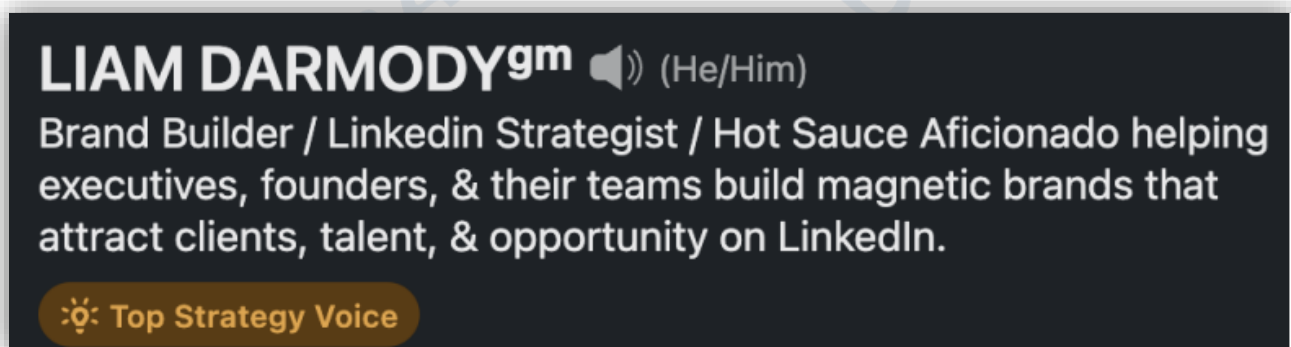


The second is the "Title + Explanation," which involves listing your title and how you describe what you do. It's a little more descriptive and shows people how communicate your value.

For example, prior to becoming the founder of Liam's Brand Stand, I spent nearly two decades leading go-to-market operations teams at startups. I also helped people use LinkedIn to find job & build their personal brands. All of that was useful to include in my headline because it painted a fuller picture of who I am.



The third example is a hybrid of the two and my preference because it's simple & straightforward. In spite of the length of this playbook, I tend to ascribe to the "never use two word when one will do" mantra of copywriting, and so my current headline looks something like this:



Note the addition of "Hot Sauce Aficionado" to the mix. I can't tell you how many conversations I have on LinkedIn start with: "So what's your favorite hot sauce?" Giving people insight into your personal hobbies & passions not only makes you more relatable, it's a great icebreaker.

So to summarize:

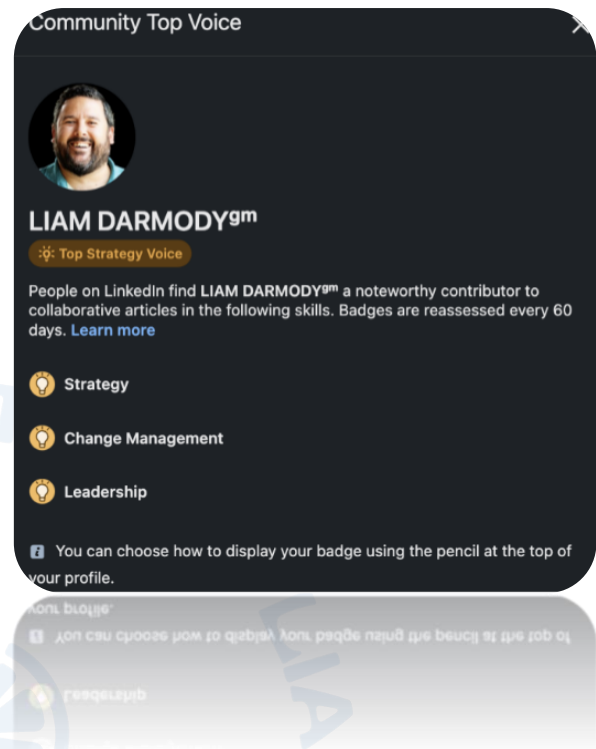
Your profile photo, banner, & headline are the most viewed & therefore most important part of your profile. If people aren't intrigued by what they see there, they aren't likely to scroll down any further, so try to get this section of your profile as close to your definition of perfect as possible.

COMMUNITY TOP VOICE BADGES

You may notice that some LinkedIn members have an orange lightbulb icon with the "Top [SPECIALTY] Voice" just beneath their headline. These top community voice badges are given to LinkedIn members who actively contribute to LinkedIn's Collaborative Articles, which are knowledge topics published by LinkedIn with insights and perspectives added by the LinkedIn community. The articles begin as AI-powered conversation starters, developed with the LinkedIn editorial team, that LinkedIn members can then contribute to.

When you contribute to a Collaborative Article, other members of the LinkedIn community can upvote your contribution as “insightful” and once you’ve hit a certain threshold of contributions + upvotes (the formula is unknown outside of LinkedIn), you’ll receive a Top Community Voice badge to display on your profile for up to 60 days. After 60 days, if you haven’t continued to contribute to articles categorized that way, the badge will be removed, so stay active if you want to keep them.

A full listing of the Collaborative Articles can be found at [linkedin.com/advice](https://www.linkedin.com/advice) and you can learn more by visiting the [Collaborative Articles FAQ](#).



CUSTOM ACTION (A.K.A. LINK)

LinkedIn lets you feature a single link on your profile that visitors can click on called a “Custom Action.” This gives LinkedIn members the ability to promote external websites to their profile visitors, which has a myriad of use cases.

For example, you can link to your website, a Calendly booking page, your portfolio, your YouTube page, your TikTok, or any online destination (that isn’t NSFW - that’s a no-no).

As a standard member, you can include a link and some link text (ie. “Book Time with Me” or “Check out my website!”). Prior to starting my own consultancy, I had “find me elsewhere online” which directed people to my [linktr.ee account](https://linktr.ee) where they could see links to all the online profiles I have among other things (like discounts to my favorite hot sauce company, [Hoff & Pepper](#)).



As a Premium Business member, you can add a button that says one of the following:

- Visit my store
- Visit my website
- Visit my portfolio
- Visit my blog
- Sign up for a demo



#HIRING, #OPENTOWORK, & PROVIDING SERVICES

Just beneath your headline there's a blue button that says "open to" and if you click that it pops up 3 options:

❖ Hiring

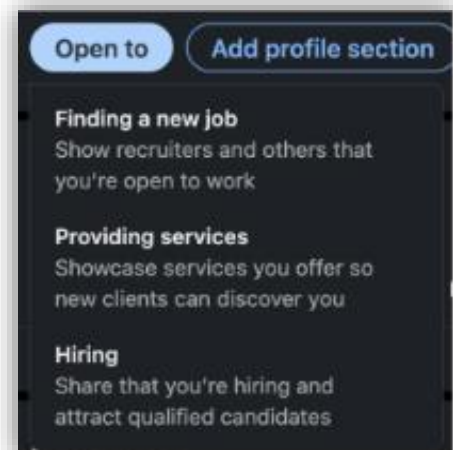
- Activating this tells LinkedIn that you're hiring. You can link directly to the job and promote it through your network. You'll also see some purple "#HIRING" treatment in your headshot that others will see when looking at your profile.

❖ Finding a new job

- Activating this tells LinkedIn that you're looking for a new opportunity and results in a green banner on your headshot that says "#OPENTOWORK" that others will see when looking at your profile. Recruiters can also search for candidates who are "open to work" through LinkedIn Recruiter.

❖ Providing services

- Activating this tells LinkedIn that you're a service provider and gives you the ability to select from a list of services, as well as share some information about why you stand out and people should consider you, as well as your location. There's no headshot treatment that accompanies activating this feature.

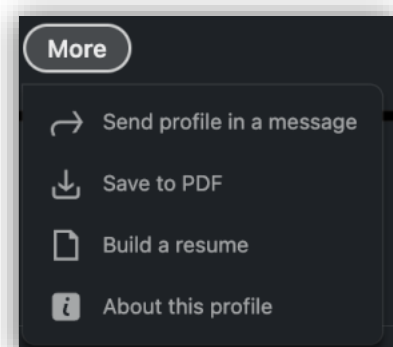


You can also turn these on by clicking on the profile image itself, selecting “add frame” and then choosing the option you’d like.



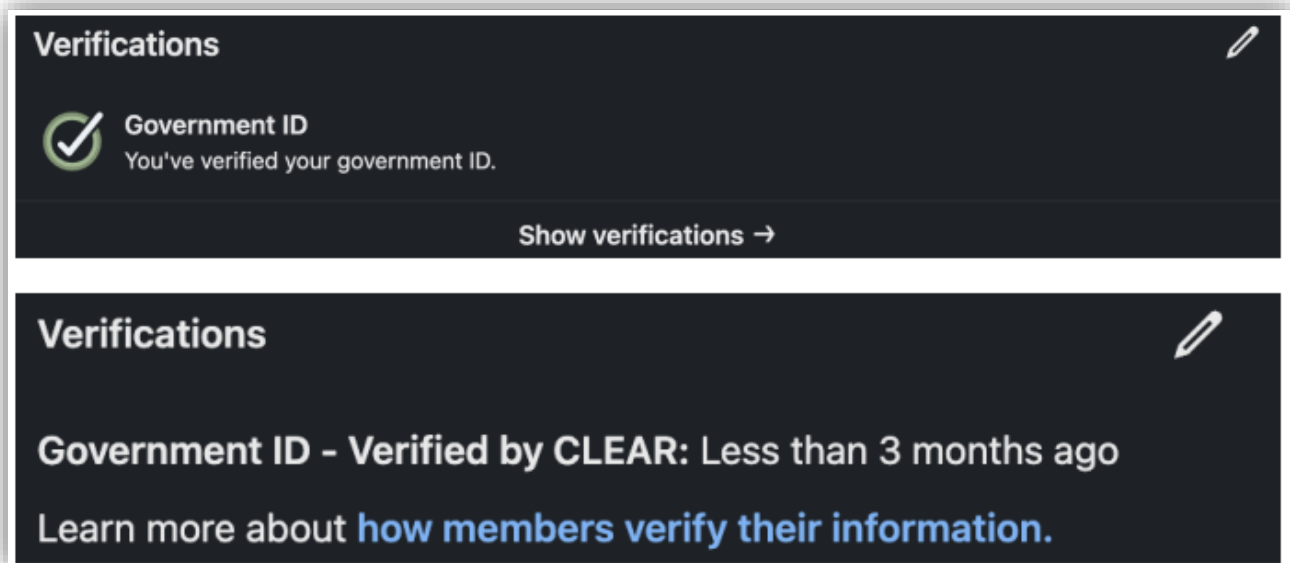
MORE

The last button on your LinkedIn Introduction section is the “more” button. Clicking that drops a menu of four actions you can take. The most useful is probably the “build a resume” feature, which converts your profile to a resume you can export as a PDF & store for future applications through LinkedIn.



VERIFICATIONS

In 2023 LinkedIn rolled out [Verification](#) in the United States and India, partnering with [CLEAR](#) and [Aadhaar](#) in each country, respectively. This feature lets members verify their identity so that there is no doubt that they are who they claim to be.



RESOURCES SECTION

The section immediately following the verifications section (for US & Indian members) or the main profile section (Rest of world) is the Resources section, which is private to you (meaning profile visitors cannot see it).

There are five categories in the Resources section:

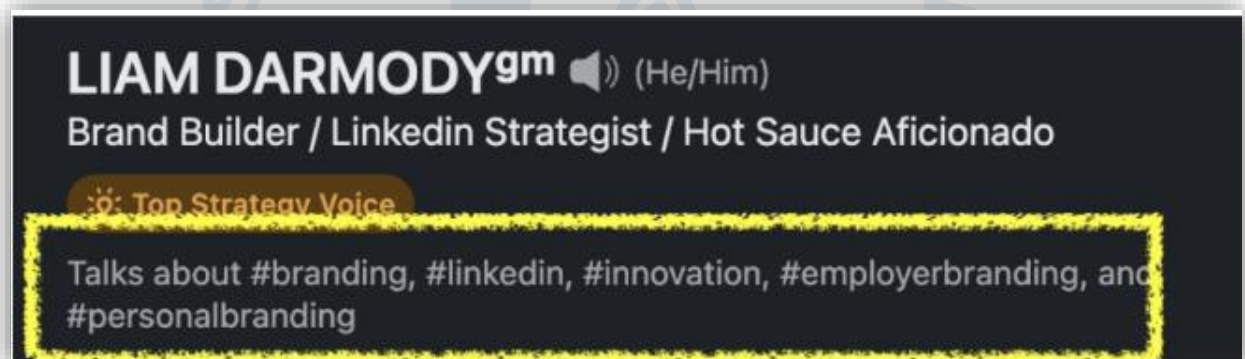
- **Creator Mode:** the most robust and important segment of this section. So much so that I dedicated a section to it below.
- **My Network:** lets you easily see how many connection, contacts, followers, and groups you're in, events you've attended, pages & hashtags you've followed, and newsletters you subscribe to.
- **Personal Demographic Information:** let's you share your demographic info w/ LinkedIn privately - it is not shared on your profile or publicly anywhere on the platform.
- **Activity:** see all of your posts in chronological order. Filtering by content type available.
- **My Items:** primarily shows jobs, learning classes, posts & articles you've saved.

Admittedly, outside of activating Creator Mode, I've never accessed any of these myself through this section, but they're there, so I'm including them!

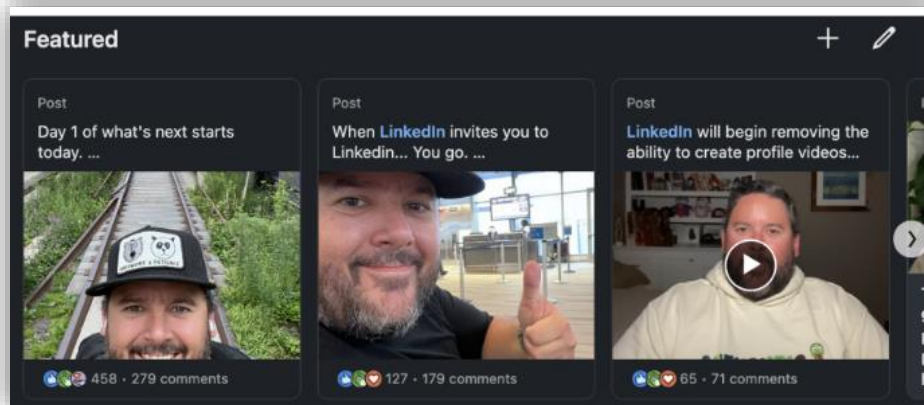
CREATOR MODE

[Creator Mode](#) provides LinkedIn members with a few unique tools aimed at helping you grow your reach and influence on LinkedIn. Here are some of the direct benefits & features:

- The Connect button on your profile changes to “Follow” by default. Your follower count will also be displayed in your profile introduction.
- Anyone who sends you a connection request will automatically start following you, even if you don't accept the connection request. This is useful because it means that you don't really need to accept the connection request unless it's someone whose content you want to see on a regular basis (remember: connection = two-way street, you both see each other's content, while following is one-way.)
- You'll be able to select up to 5 hashtags to feature atop your profile indicating which topics you post about regularly, making it easier for other LinkedIn members to discover your content and follow you.

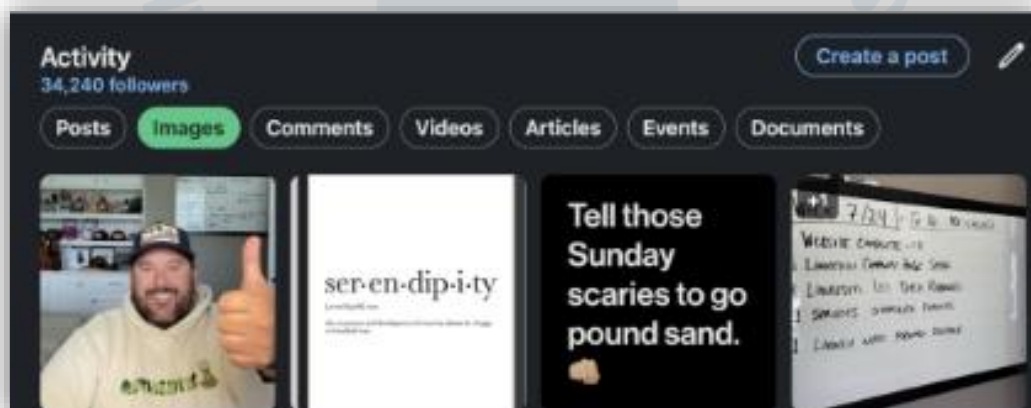


- Your featured and activity sections will be moved up higher on your profile so that they are more easily discoverable.

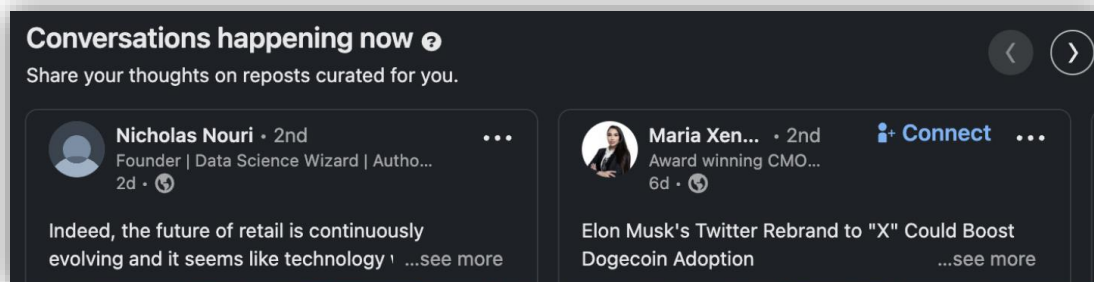


Your activity section, which normally defaults to showing your most recent comments, reactions, or likes, will give you the option to prominently display your most recent content by one of the following content mediums, which is useful because not all creators like using the same content medium, so this let's you shine a spotlight on what you create most. For me, that's images with text. For someone who does lots of video, it would likely be video.

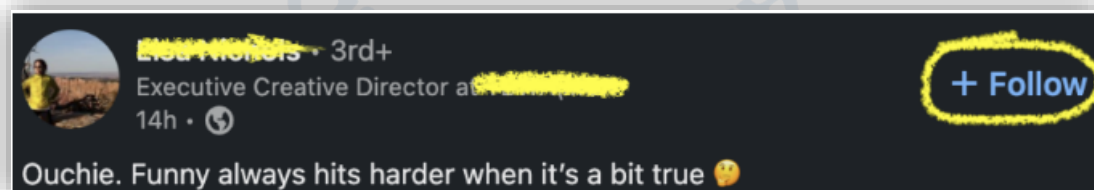
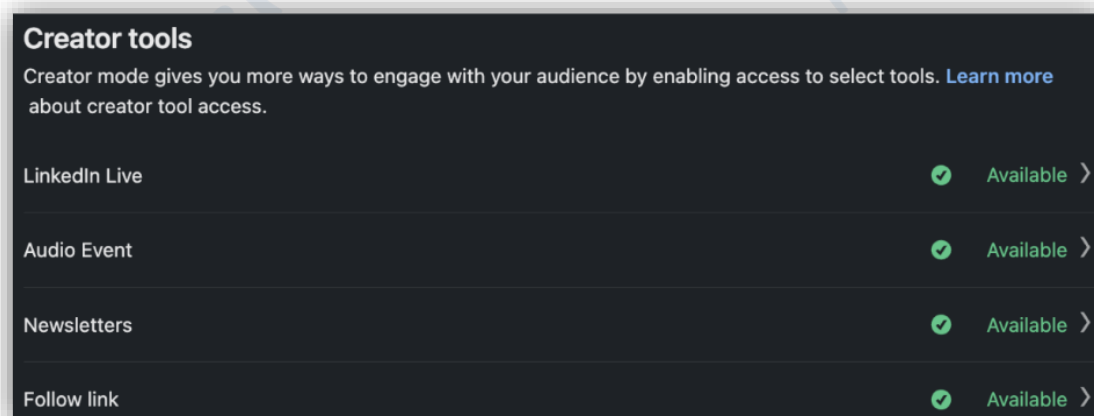
- Posts
- Images
- Comments
- Videos
- Articles
- Events
- Documents



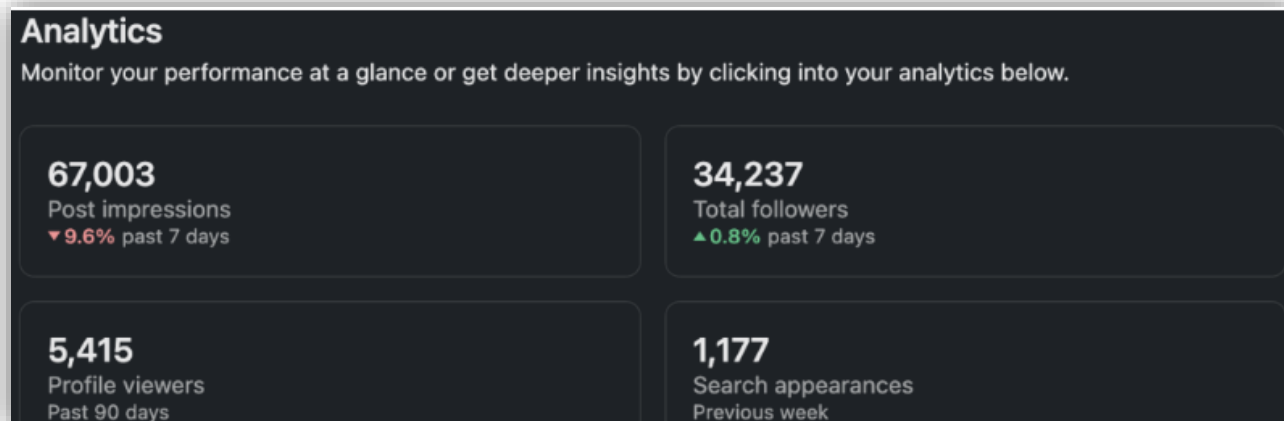
- You get to add that “Custom Action” link referenced above to direct profile visitors to external sites you want them to visit.
- You’ll be eligible to be featured as a suggested creator to follow by LinkedIn’s distribution algorithm. This is useful because it means LinkedIn is promoting you without any effort on your part besides turning this on and creating content sometimes.



- You'll be eligible for LinkedIn Live, Audio Events, Newsletters, and follow link. The latter is especially useful because it means that 2nd & 3rd degree connections who see your content in the feed will see a "+Follow" call-to-action on your posts.

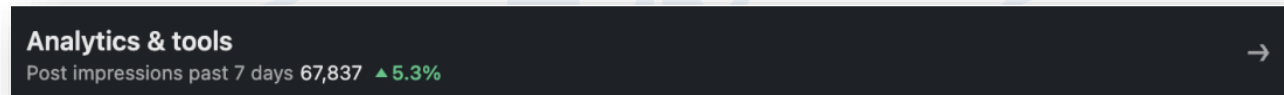


- Turning on creator mode also grants members access to [creator analytics](#), which include [combined post analytics](#) and [audience analytics](#).



ANALYTICS

With Creator Mode turned on, you're able to access LinkedIn's analytics, which are somewhat controversially placed at the very top of your profile so that you'll always see if your post impressions over the last 7 days are up or down over the 7 days prior.



Clicking on that Analytics bar takes you to the broader analytics & tools menu that shows you 4 key data points:

- Post impressions, which default to past 7 days, but you can toggle it to engagements as well and view the stats over 14, 28, 90, or 365 days. Since impressions are simply your post showing up in someone's feed without a guarantee that they actually viewed your content, I typically filter by engagements because that's a stronger signal of how my network feels about my content. You'll also see a list of your top performing posts beneath the bar graph.



- Total followers shows your follower growth over the past 7 days by default, but you can toggle the stats over 14, 28, 90, or 365 days as well. It also shows you the top demographics of your followers by titles, locations, industries, seniority, company size, and companies. Job titles are particularly useful because you can see if your content is attracting the target audience you're hoping to attract.
- Search appearances shows how often your profile appeared in search results over the past week. Unlike the other analytics data points, you cannot adjust this for time frame. You'll also see the job titles you were found for, top companies searchers work, and top titles of your searchers.
- Profile viewers shows the number of times your profile has been viewed over the last 90 days by default, but you can toggle to 14, 28, and 365 days. Additionally you can filter by company, industry, and location, if that's of use to you.



LinkedIn Analytics are relatively new to the platform and many diehard LinkedIn enthusiasts complain that they are lackluster. As a result, there are several other companies that can be helpful to those of you desirous of deeper analytics. For example, Shield intelligence is a tool that scrapes publicly available data on LinkedIn and compiles it into views that many prefer to LinkedIn's native analytics. They also make it possible for you to export all of your data to a CSV and run deeper analyses. [\(this is also a service I offer\).](#)

FEATURED SECTION

Similar to the activity section, I touched on the featured section as part of the Creator Mode portion of this document, but I'll go into a bit greater detail of what you can do with it here.

LinkedIn's featured section enables you to showcase the content that you're most proud of prominently. It's a great way to put some of your best work on display. There are 4 types of content you can feature:

POSTS

Whether it's a post memorializing an amazing career achievement, or something you wrote that tells a good story about your journey and got loads of engagement, featuring posts is a great way to showcase your content creation chops.

NEWSLETTERS

If you've got a LinkedIn newsletter, you can spotlight it in the featured section, which increases the likelihood that someone visiting your profile will subscribe.

ARTICLES

Articles have been a thing on LinkedIn for years, but compared to other content mediums, articles get very little algorithmic distribution. This makes sense when you consider that LinkedIn wants members to stay on the feed and articles take members away from it.

That said, if you've got a penchant for long-form content, LinkedIn articles are a way to create it and the featured section is a good place to put the ones you're proudest of so that they're displayed more prominently on your profile.

LINKS

With the addition of a custom action link as part of activating Creator Mode, including links in your featured section is slightly less meaningful than it once was, but it's still an opportunity for you to ensure that external sites you'd like to call attention to are visible to your profile visitors. You can include a link and up to 500 characters describing what the link is.

MEDIA

The media option differs from the others in the Featured section because it allows you to upload something from your computer rather than featuring something that already exists on LinkedIn.

There's really no limit to what you can post there - videos, gifs, jpegs, etc. - but you'll want to be selective about what you do. Your featured section should be where you share things that you think are the best representation of your skills in action so random gifs or meme's may not be the right play.

ACTIVITY SECTION

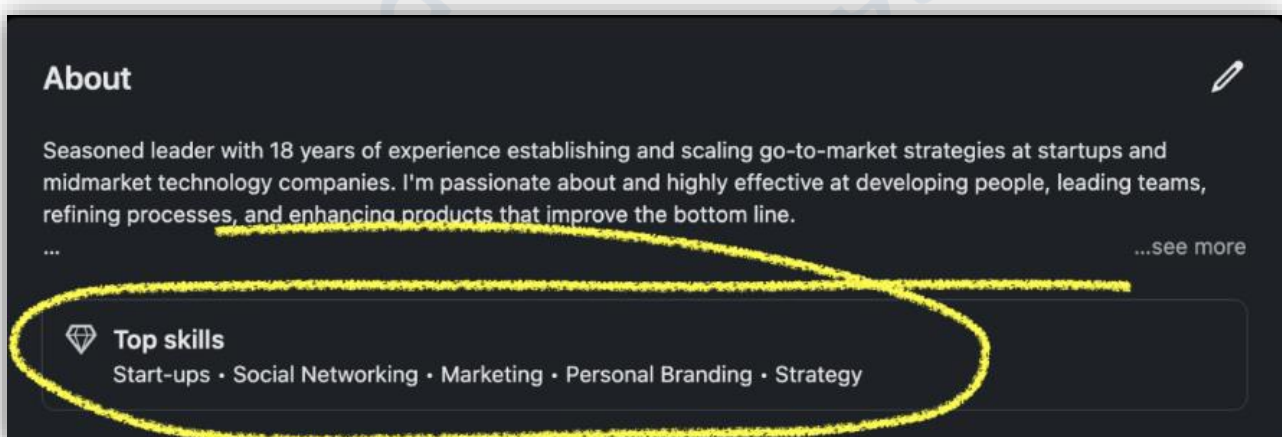
I referenced the Activity Section above as part of Creator Mode because of the filter capabilities that unlocks, but without creator mode activated the activity section is pretty straight forward: it shows a snippet of your activity in the form of reactions, comments and reposts. Profile visitors can also click "[see all activity](#)" which is the fastest way for someone to see what types of posts you engage, the types of comments you leave, and your posts.

It's not uncommon for me to include a [link to all of my posts](#) into every connection request I send & sometimes work it into the comments I leave on other posts as well so that people on the platform have easy access to all of my content without having to visit my profile.

ABOUT SECTION

Once you've got a spiffy profile photo, banner, headline, and have Creator Mode turned on (and everyone should have Creator Mode), it's time to focus on your About section.

Before writing anything, pick the Top 5 skills and add them to your About section. These can differ from the five hashtags you'll pick for your Profile Introduction section when activating Creator Mode, so it's an opportunity to send an additional five signals to LinkedIn about how you wish to be perceived.



This is also important because LinkedIn is increasingly using skills to "match" people with jobs, content, and indeed other people. They've rolled the skills out not only in the about section, but also in every job you list in your experience section. Choose wisely!

Now, onto the writing part...

The About section can be challenging for people because it's sandwiched between your profile introduction and your work experience, so many ask: "what should I write about that isn't covered elsewhere?"

Don't worry, it's not just you. For the last decade my About section read as follows:

- Seasoned operational leader with proven success scaling start-up companies, building high-performing teams across various disciplines, and developing people, processes, and products that positively impact revenue.
- Passionate people's champion, manager, and leader.
- Natural brand ambassador.

It was a fine, run-of-the-mill, description for an About section that I never really knew what to do with, but it was a snoozefest & limited portrayal of what I'm actually "about."

And therein lies the point: each of us is so much more than a profile picture with a bunch of work experience. We've all got a unique personality & story to tell, so why not use that massive About section to give visitors to your profile a glimpse into the REAL you?

Linkedin gives us 2,600 characters to work with, and I recommend using every last one of them if you can because Linkedin profiles are indexed by search engines and that poses a great SEO opportunity.

Since redoing my About section, I've received hundreds of personalized messages from people saying things like "I don't connect with Canadians, they drink too much at hockey games" or "I'm an ENFP as well" or "I love that Jefferson quote about hard work resulting in good luck, too."

If you fill your About section with conversation starters, it'll start a lot of conversations. If you start a lot of conversations on LinkedIn, it'll create opportunities you didn't know existed.

On the next page you'll see a screenshot of my about section prior to starting my own consulting firm, which I use as an example because most people are employed by a company so this version is likely more relatable than my present one. Notice how much more you "know" about me after reading this compared to the pithy 3-bullet version of yore that I included above.

Ultimately, there's no "right" or "wrong" way to format your About section. The most important thing is that it's an authentic representation of you and something you're comfortable with.

The bottom line is this: the easier you make it for people to relate to you, the more likely they are to do so. Don't worry about "what your employer will think" because chances are they are pretty aware of & comfortable with who you are & what you stand for, otherwise, you probably wouldn't be employed by them, right?

Be yourself.

Share your story.

Because no one else can tell it like you can.

About

Seasoned leader with 18 years of experience establishing and scaling go-to-market strategies at startups and midmarket technology companies. I'm passionate about and highly effective at developing people, leading teams, refining processes, and enhancing products that improve the bottom line.

I'm a highly-adaptable, critical thinker, rational risk taker, and effective problem solver and pride myself on being an emotionally intelligent servant leader with a passion for coaching & mentoring talent.

Outside of work, I help individuals build their personal brands on LinkedIn & network their way into dream jobs.

My Roots 🌱:

- ~Irish/Italian-Canadian born US Citizen.
- ~Proud husband to an amazing wife & father to two wonderful tiny humans.
- ~Have lived in Toronto, Los Angeles, Boston, DC, & now Raleigh, NC.

My Work 🏢:

- ~Business operations leader who loves to build, launch, & scale tech companies.
- ~People's champion, passionately devoted to building fantastic teams & culture.
- ~Emotionally intelligent leader who loves to inspire, develop & mentor talented people.

My Passion ❤️:

- ~Career coaching / mentoring / LinkedIn personal branding strategy.
- ~Aspiring backyard BBQ pitmaster.
- ~Hot sauce aficionado.

My Personality 🧠 (according to data):

- ~Gallup Strengthsfinder Top 5: Woo, Communication, Strategic, Positivity, Adaptability
- ~ColorCode Results: Yellow (53%), Red (22.94%), Blue (16.16%), White (7.9%)
- ~Myers Briggs: ENFP > Extraverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Perceiving.
- ~16personalities type: "The Campaigner" (ENFP-T) | Role: Diplomat | Strategy: Social Engagement
- ~Good.co: Maverick, Visionary, Go-Getter --> Driven, Creative, Innovative, Idea-generator, Success-oriented, Adventurous
- ~Kolbe A: 7-3-8-3

"Terrific when juggling rapidly changing priorities. Known for taking risks grounded in practical reality. Don't mess around with what has already been done, but temper trial-and-error approach by strategizing options."

Favorite Quotes:

"I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it" - Thomas Jefferson

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." - Lao Tzu

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others." - Jack Welch

"There are no strangers here, only friends you haven't yet met" - William Butler Yeats

Want to know more? Just ask! I'm an open book... 📖

<https://linktr.ee/liamdarmody>

EXPERIENCE SECTION

Work Experience

While resumes are great at outlining what, when, and where you did specific work, they are not great at conveying the how or why, and that's the best part!


Your Work Experience is a great place to highlight not only what you've done throughout your career, but to inject some additional context & personal narrative to it all. I tell clients to consider making it a bit more conversational than you would a resume.

Yes, you should include key accomplishments achieved at each job in a succinct manner that highlights the impact (quantifiably if possible), but you can also elaborate on why that experience was so important to the company, how you managed to accomplish that objective, or what you enjoyed about the experience.

I predict that 10 years from now, one-page resumes will be a thing of the past and LinkedIn will be what hiring teams look at exclusively, and when they do, they'll want to see more about you than just a bunch of bullets.

Here's an example of my most recent work experience - notice the incorporation of some quotes complimenting the strategies I employed. You won't find those on my resume

And here's a random example of what most people's Work Experience section's look like:


Director of Employer Brand & Talent Marketing Operations
 WillowTree - Full-time
 Jul 2021 - Jun 2023 - 2 yrs
 Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Area
 helped me get this job

Hired into a newly created, board-visible role to build an outbound recruitment marketing engine at scale.

Collaborated with executive leadership and cross-functional teams to create target personas for design, engineering, product and project management prospects.

Hired and led a team of four to build a prospect database of 15,000 and deploy evergreen email marketing campaigns that yielded 59% open, 18% reply, and 9% conversion rates.

Launched "ShopTalk Conversations" campaign strategy that became the second best-performing recruitment source, yielding candidates 2.5x more likely to receive offers and 3x more likely to be hired.


Developed social media and employee advocacy strategies that increased company LinkedIn following by 39%.


Implemented cost-saving strategies for advertising channels and implemented LinkedIn Recruiter platform, increasing efficiency across a 20-person talent acquisition team.


Choice quotes from interested talent prospects:


- "Would you be open to having a conversation with one of our devs to talk about what it's like to build here?" < that is one of the best recruiting pitches I've heard right there" -- Frontend Web Developer
- "I gotta say that I normally loathe the "just checking in" emails and it's the quickest way to get on my hard-no list, but the ShopTalks you described in the first email are just so interesting that I'm kind of curious..." - Engineering Director
- "Frankly this is the most innovative thing I've seen in recruiting. Well done!" - Product Manager

Experience


Enterprise Support Engineer
 Splunk
 Nov 2015 - Present - 5 yrs 2 mos
 Washington D.C. Metro Area


Junior Systems Engineer
 American Institutes for Research
 Dec 2014 - Nov 2015 - 1 yr
 Washington D.C. Metro Area

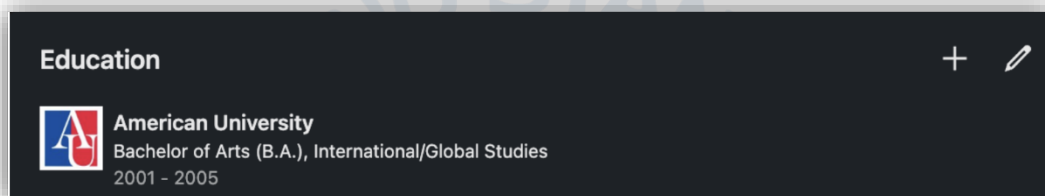

LivingSocial
 2 yrs 11 mos


Desktop & Platforms Solution Specialist
 Jul 2012 - Nov 2014 - 2 yrs 5 mos

EDUCATION

The education section of your profile is pretty straightforward. If you received degrees and/or other accredited educational experiences, you should list it so that people know and because LinkedIn then knows where you went & helps you connect with people who did the same.

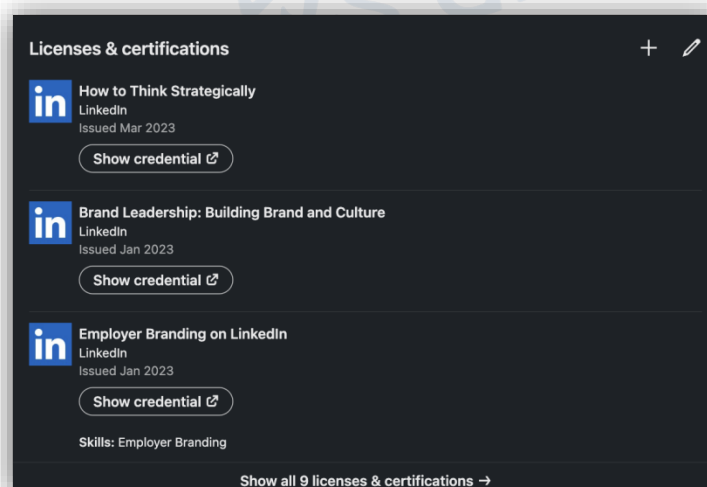
Your Work Experience is a great place to highlight not only what you've done throughout your career, but to inject some additional context & personal narrative to it all. I tell clients to consider making it a bit more conversational than you would a resume.



LICENSES & CERTIFICATES

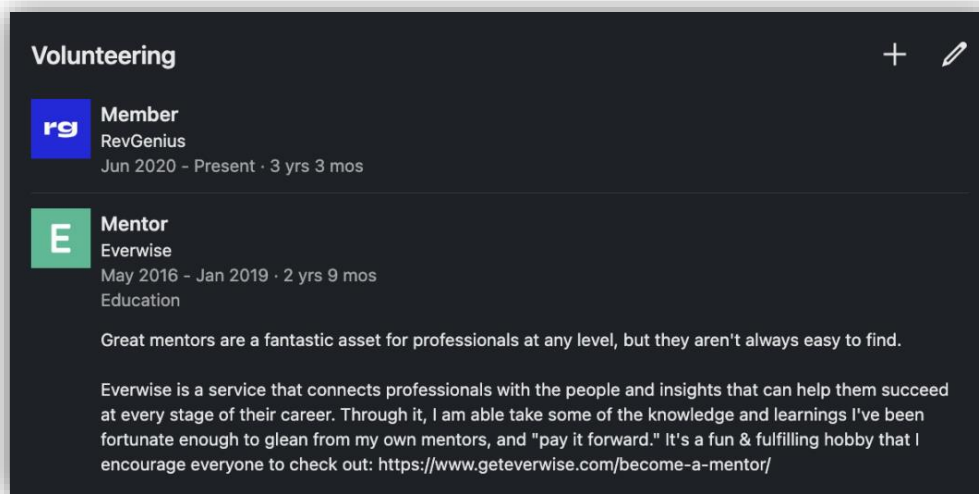
The licenses & certifications section of your profile is a great place to let LinkedIn brag about your accomplishments without you needing to find words or space to do so elsewhere.

If there are training certifications that you've taken, link to them here for all visitors to your profile to see. It also tells LinkedIn that you've accomplished these things and it's never a bad thing to ensure LinkedIn's algorithms know more about you so it can create opportunities for you by surfacing your profile in the search results of people looking for people like you!



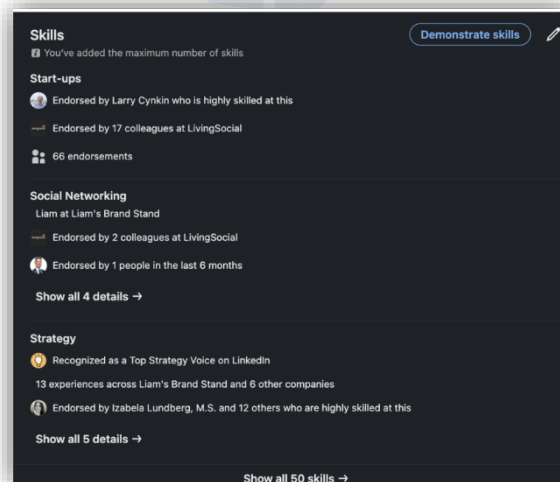
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Every company loves to see a little volunteer action from prospective candidates and this is a great place to showcase it. Whether you build houses for Habitat for Humanity on weekends, mentor youth via Big Brother/Big Sister programs, or just help out at the local community center, it's all worthwhile information to share in this section of your profile to show that there's more to you than simply your 9-5, or whatever your work hours may be.

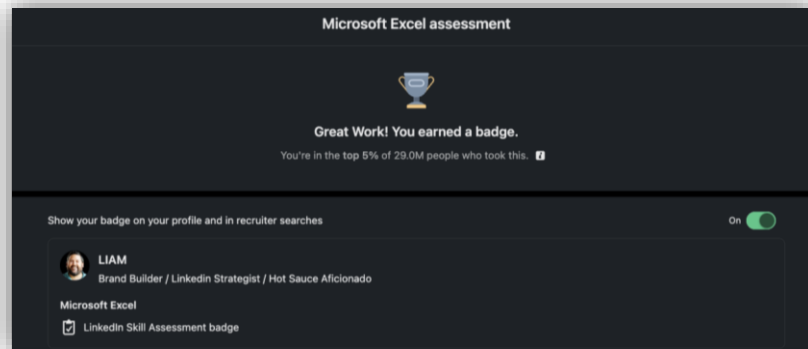


SKILLS & ENDORSEMENTS

No matter how good you are at self-promotion, having others endorse you for specific skills is a powerful way to establish credibility. LinkedIn allows you to add as many as 50 skills to your profile, which others can endorse. There's power in numbers, so the more people endorse you, the faster your true strengths become prevalent.



Atop the skills section, you'll see a button that says "Demonstrate Skills" which lets you take skills assessments to show what you're empirically good at, such as an Excel test. Passing the assessment earns a badge that you can display on your profile.



Are you noticing a trend here? Between creator mode hashtags, about & experience section top skills, and the skills section itself, LinkedIn is gathering a whole lot of signals from your profile that should help the company match you with content, connections, and opportunities that are relevant to your skillset. By ensuring your skills are abundant and accurate throughout your profile, you're making it easier for LinkedIn to tailor your experience here as best it can.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The accomplishments section of the LinkedIn profile is often overlooked because it's so far down the page, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't fill it out. As I've said above, the more you can share about your achievements with LinkedIn, the better it can match you with opportunity.

Publications

Been published? There's a space for that on your LinkedIn profile and you should be using it. This section let you put the title, publisher, publication date, author, publication URL, and a description of up to 2,000 characters about the story behind your published work.

Patents

Got patents? You can throw that in here too! This section lets you list your Patent Title, Patent office, Patent or application number, inventor(s), patent status (issued or pending), issue date, patent URL, and description.

Courses

Let's say you haven't quite taken all of the courses required to get that Project Management or Accounting certification you're pursuing, but you've taken some courses that show you're investing time & resources into doing so... that's what this section is for. You can list the course name, number, and which role it's associated with.

Projects

If there's a project you're particularly proud of, I'd suggest finding a way to incorporate it into the featured section of your profile, however, if that's not possible and/or you're not THAT proud of it but still wanting to share that you participated, that's what you'd put here. You can list the project name, start & end date, creator, which role it was associated with, project URL, and description of up to 2,000 characters.

Honors & awards

Were you the class president? Voted most likely to succeed? Lawyer of the Year? Inc. Magazine 30 under 30 finalist? This is a great place to feature that. Although again, you should be putting the achievements you're MOST proud of in the "featured" section of your profile as that's more prominently placed and will get better visibility than this section.

Test scores

Since the "Skill Quizzes" provided in the Skills & Endorsements section tend to focus on technical skills that LinkedIn itself can test your abilities on, you might not find tests you've taken there. If your profession is one that requires you to take & pass certain test criteria on a regular basis, this is the place to list that information. You can list the Title, Role, Score, Test month & year, and a description of up to 2,000 characters.

Languages

This is where you can list languages you speak & to what degree of proficiency. Worth noting that languages spoken IS a search filter, so once again this is an opportunity to tell LinkedIn that you might be a good fit for certain job opportunities & criteria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Much like Skills & Endorsements, the voices of others often speak louder than our own so building a library of recommendations is never a bad idea. I've found that the best way to get recommendations is to give them without expecting anything in return. The whole "I scratched your back, you scratch mine" comes into play.

That said, you shouldn't feel like you can't ask for recommendations. People you've worked closely with will likely be happy to write you a recommendation, but may not think of it if you don't ask, so embrace the idea that no one will sing your praises if you don't, and go get those recs!

ORGANIZATIONS

Are you MENSA smart? Were you the president of your fraternity or sorority in college? Did you win the state championship for debate in high school? Any organization you're proud to have been a part of but doesn't fall into the "volunteer experience" bucket belongs here. You can put the organization name, position held, start & end date or ongoing membership, and description of up to 2,000 characters.

INTERESTS

Interests lie at the bottom of the profile & I'll be honest, I NEVER look at it, but I believe it's created automatically by LinkedIn based on profiles/pages you follow & groups you're a part of. That, or I don't remember filling mine out. Either way, I have no strong feelings about this section. Just being thorough by mentioning it.

LINKEDIN 201: Defining Your Brand

FINDING YOUR WHY

Before you jump into the deep end of content creation & growing your network far & wide in pursuit of LinkedIn influencer glory, you need to lay a solid foundation upon which to build. After all, LinkedIn is a place for professionals to establish their reputation online, nurture existing relationships, find like-minded people, and grow their network. All of that is infinitely harder to do if you don't know why you're doing it & how you want to be perceived.

Don't worry, I'm not asking you to do loads of soul searching here, but I am suggesting you take some time to think about & clarify the following questions:

- ☐ What are your primary objectives for being on LinkedIn?
 - ☐ Store your professional experience
 - ☐ Keep in touch with existing network
 - ☐ Meet new people to build relationships with
 - ☐ Sell a product or service
 - ☐ Find a job
 - ☐ Establish your personal brand
 - ☐ Entertainment
 - ☐ Learning & development
 - ☐ Create content
- ☐ What's holding you back from accomplishing these objectives?
- ☐ How much time do you spend on the platform at present?
- ☐ How much time do you think you can reasonably devote to LinkedIn on a daily basis?
- ☐ What are 3-5 adjectives you'd like your audience to use when describing your brand?
- ☐ What are 1-3 distinct topics you're passionate about to discuss for hours at a time?
- ☐ Who are some people creating content you really enjoy on LinkedIn?

FINDING YOUR INSPIRATION

There are 5 excuses I hear most from people who struggle when trying to build a personal brand on LinkedIn:

1. "I have no idea what to post about"
2. "No one cares what I think or have to say about business"
3. "I'm not sure what my employer will think or if they're cool with it"
4. "Every time I post content, I get very little engagement so I just give up"
5. "I don't have time"

Before we break each of these down, the first thing to know is that these are very common insecurities and it's likely that 99% of "Linkedinfluencers" felt the exact same way before they got started. 99% of them will also probably tell you that the #1 rule is not to overthink things.

Now to debunk the above excuses...

Excuse #1:

"I have no idea what to post about"

Counterpoint #1:

Sure you do! We humans spend a good 3rd of our lives working and there are so many thoughts that go through our heads about what we do, who we do it with, industry we're in, etc. It's not that you don't have the ideas, it's that you're not sure how to translate them from your head into LinkedIn content. Big difference!

The good news is, that's an easy problem to solve, especially when we can use artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT to find inspiration with a simple prompt. For example, here are 52 post topics you can use to create one post per week for a year, thanks to ChatGPT:

ChatGPT Prompt:

"I want you to act as a content marketer and strategist who specializes in helping people build their personal brands on LinkedIn. I'm looking for 52 content prompts to inspire clients who say that they have no idea what to write about on LinkedIn. Can you provide those for me?"

Output:

1. Share a key moment of personal growth and how it impacted your career.
2. Discuss a habit you're trying to break and why.
3. Share an example of when you stepped out of your comfort zone at work.
4. Discuss a life-changing book you've read and its impact on you.
5. Share your reflections on the importance of self-care for productivity.
6. Discuss a time when you've had to challenge your own beliefs in your career.
7. Post about a personal failure and the lessons you learned from it.
8. Describe how your career has shaped your personality.
9. Reflect on how you maintain work-life balance.
10. Share about a personal habit that positively impacts your professional life.
11. Discuss your strategy for overcoming procrastination.
12. Share how you approach personal and professional boundaries.
13. Discuss your favorite ways to relax after a tough work week.
14. Share how your hobbies or passions have influenced your work style.
15. Discuss how you have changed as a professional in the past five years.
16. Post about the relationship between personal happiness and professional success.
17. Share a time when you overcame a personal fear in a professional context.
18. Discuss how you have dealt with a significant change in your career.
19. Share your favorite self-reflection exercises.
20. Discuss the role of mentorship in personal and professional growth.

21. Share how mindfulness practices impact your work.
22. Discuss the personal skills you're currently working to improve.
23. Post about a volunteer or charity work experience that influenced your perspective on work.
24. Share how you stay motivated during challenging periods.
25. Discuss how you maintain your physical health for work stamina.
26. Post about a time you questioned your career path and how you handled it.
27. Discuss how you've grown through feedback at work.
28. Share how your personal values align with your career.
29. Discuss the role of patience in your professional journey.
30. Post about how you've changed your work routine to accommodate personal needs.
31. Share how personal relationships and networking have influenced your career.
32. Discuss how you nurture creativity in your professional life.
33. Share how personal mentors have shaped your career.
34. Discuss how you approach continuous learning and self-improvement.
35. Post about an "aha" moment in your career.
36. Share a personal story related to resilience in your professional life.
37. Discuss how gratitude plays a role in your work.
38. Share how you've used personal setbacks as motivation in your career.
39. Discuss how travel or exposure to other cultures has influenced your work.
40. Share how you've managed work-related stress.
41. Discuss how you've reconciled personal dreams with professional goals.
42. Share how you balance personal relationships with work commitments.
43. Discuss how you stay grounded during professional successes.
44. Share a personal anecdote about teamwork and collaboration.
45. Discuss how embracing vulnerability has helped you at work.
46. Share your strategies for maintaining positivity in the workplace.
47. Discuss how your upbringing has influenced your work ethic.
48. Share how you've dealt with uncertainty or ambiguity in your career.
49. Discuss how personal passion fuels your professional efforts.
50. Share a moment when you felt fulfilled in your career.
51. Discuss how compassion plays a role in your professional life.
52. Share your reflection on the past year of your life, personally and professionally.

Even if only 10 of these got your gears going, that's 10 posts that should be easier to create now that you've found the inspiration. You can customize your prompts to suit your profession as much as you'd like and get all sorts of different variations from which to draw inspiration.

And while I don't encourage people to have ChatGPT create posts for you altogether, I'd be doing you a disservice if I didn't tell you that it is capable of creating very compelling copy if you learn to prompt it effectively enough, and that can be a great starting point for something you edit to be more authentically you.

Excuse #2:

“No one cares what I think or have to say about business”

Counterpoint #2:

First things first: are you creating content for yourself or for other people? The whole point of creating content to develop your personal brand is so that others can get a sense for how you think and what your personality is like.

If people read your content & engage with it, great! But that shouldn't be your primary motivation for putting it out there. Your primary motivation should be to give anyone who might be interested a glimpse into your mind. To add value to even one person who thinks differently after reading your content. And if your content isn't their cup of tea, they can keep on scrolling and you'll be none the wiser. No harm, no foul, right?

Your personal brand is a reflection of you and therefore your intention should be to put your authentic, genuine thoughts on display, irrespective of vanity metrics. Think of LinkedIn as your professional storefront and your content as the display in the window. It's better to have a window display to entice some people to come in vs. having none at all.

Once you find your voice (see next section), you'll start to notice more and more people walking into your proverbial store.

Excuse #3:

“I'm not sure what my employer will think or if they're cool with it”

Counterpoint #3:

This is a legitimate concern depending on your chosen profession & specific employer, so I hesitate to make broad recommendations, however, I do think that many people overestimate how much employers care about this and encourage you to have a conversation with someone in Marketing or HR at your company about it.

Provided the content you're creating is not unprofessional or otherwise reflects poorly on the company, most employers have more important things to do than hang out on LinkedIn to police their employee's posts. It's also worth noting that many employers are realizing the value of employee generated content for business development and talent acquisition, so they encourage it.

Whenever someone asks me how to determine if what they plan to write will be acceptable through the lens of their employer, it usually goes like this:

Me: “What's the first thing most colleagues say to one another on a Monday morning?”

Them: "how was your weekend?"

Me: "Right. And how many people have denied answering the question because it's 'too personal and not appropriate for a professional environment?'"

Them: "none."

Professionals are human beings and humans care about and are interested in other humans. Provided you are staying within the bounds of normal office watercooler chit chat, you're probably fine!

Bottom line: your LinkedIn page is yours, not your employers.

Excuse #4:

"Every time I post content, I get very little engagement so I just gave up"

Counterpoint #4:

I've spoken to so many people who start posting on LinkedIn thinking they are going to be Gary Vaynerchuk in no time, only to give up after a month because the 8 posts they created aren't getting millions of impressions, reactions, or comments from their 647 followers.

That's simply not enough effort over a long enough period of time to expect meaningful results.

LinkedIn is a BIG place with 900 million+ members, 90% of which don't check it very often, so you've got to really be in it for the long haul to reap the benefits.

And it's worth it because your personal brand stays with you throughout your career & beyond. Don't let frustration over something as silly as vanity metrics prevent you from building it.

My formula for success on LinkedIn is:

PEACE = SUCCESS

Patience
Empathy
Authenticity
Consistency
+Engagement

S U C C E S S

And believe me when I say that I still have to remind myself of this on a regular basis, despite having written thousands of posts garnering 20,000,000+ impressions over 4 years. LinkedIn makes you work for it, but the reward is worth it, I promise!

Excuse #5:

"I don't have time"

Counterpoint #5:

It's not about not "having" time. It's about making time. If it matters, you will make time.

Whenever I hear this excuse, I always ask the following questions:

1. How much time do you think it takes to effectively grow on LinkedIn?
2. How much time do you spend on other social media sites daily?

The most common answers to these questions are "I'm not sure" and "30-minutes to an hour – but other social platforms are different!"

That is a mistake.

The illusion that creating content to build your personal brand on LinkedIn is somehow more labor intensive & time consuming as posting on any other social media platform is exactly that: an illusion!

What's really happening is that you haven't found your reason, inspiration, or voice, but the fact that you're reading this shows that you are interested in and willing to make the time, so let's talk about how to help you make the most of that!

The following are my suggestions for how to best find your inspiration quickly:

Connect with people you already know

The best way to start building an audience for your content & personal brand is by making sure you're connected to people who already know you so make sure you're connected to family, friends, current and former colleagues.

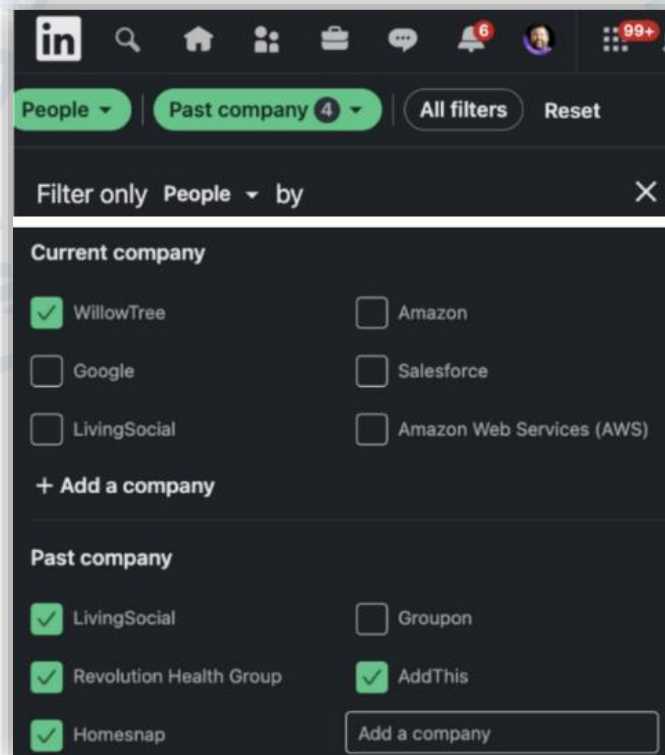
Here's how:

1. Draft a connection request template that's 300 characters or less (save room for adhoc personalization), genuine but repeatable, & with a clear call to action. For example:

Hey [NAME],

How have you been? I just realized we're not connected on LinkedIn and since you're someone I think highly of & have always enjoyed working with, I thought we should change that! I've just endorsed you for skills I think you're great at & look forward to keeping in touch here.

2. Search for people you know in this order:
 - a. Top of mind contacts: these are the people whose names stand out in your mind & they are likely the ones you have the best existing rapport & relationships with.
 - b. Common bond contacts: these are the people whose names may not be at the forefront of your mind but would recognize & think highly of you.
3. If they create content, engage with several of their posts.
4. Endorse them on LinkedIn for skills they have before inviting them to connect. If you'd like to take it a step further, you can also write them a recommendation, however, I'd suggest reserving this only for people with whom you've worked closely & whose work you can confidently vouch for. A good rule of thumb is to write recommendations for people you'd be happy to provide a reference for with a potential employer.
5. Send your connection request. You don't need to personalize it too much if a relationship already exists



Follow your fascination & Fill Your Feed

Find, follow, & utilize #hashtags that interest you in order to help LinkedIn curate your content feed. Like many other social networks, you can use hashtags on LinkedIn for a variety of useful purposes such as:

- Finding content related to a topic you're interested in
- Filling your feed with content that may be relevant to you (this also feeds inspiration, which is why it's good to follow hashtags and not just people)
- Finding new people to follow or connect with whose content interests you
- Categorizing your content to improve targeting & increase visibility in the feeds of others who care about the topic.

Here's a list of the Top 20 Hashtags by follower count taken from a much larger list I have and share with my coaching clients.

Hashtag	Followers	URL
india	67,245,331	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/india
innovation	38,578,835	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/innovation
management	35,768,207	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/management
humanresources	33,053,890	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/humanresources
digitalmarketing	27,218,994	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/digitalmarketing
technology	26,276,437	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/technology
creativity	25,039,421	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/creativity
future	24,415,346	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/future
futurism	23,328,439	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/futurism
entrepreneurship	22,576,840	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/entrepreneurship
careers	22,403,162	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/careers
markets	22,105,029	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/markets
startups	21,107,940	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/startups
marketing	20,264,661	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/marketing
socialmedia	19,580,274	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/socialmedia
venturecapital	19,188,762	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/venturecapital
socialnetworking	18,917,393	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/socialnetworking
leanstartups	18,872,203	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/leanstartups
economy	18,543,216	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/economy
economics	17,930,345	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/hashtag/economics

Find & follow people who post content you're interested in

One of my favorite sayings is: “there are no strangers here, only friends you haven’t yet met” by William Butler Yeats and LinkedIn is the embodiment of that phrase. Following others and engaging with their content breeds familiarity that can evolve into connection & friendship.

Similarly to how you’d search for people you do know, you can also search for people you don’t know who share common interests and/or professional experience as you do.

- Profession (ie. people with “marketing” in their title)
- Location (ie. people in your city, people in other cities that are a hub for industries you care about like San Francisco for Technology or New York & London for Banking).
- Content (ie. follow those hashtags!)
- Companies

Once you’ve identified people that interest you, **FOLLOW THEM**. Following people you’re not ready to connect with is useful because it increases the likelihood that their content will show up in your feed, which you can then use for:

- Entertainment
- Inspiration & ideation
- Exposure to their followers & connections
- Increasing your own exposure
- Getting on that creators radar, making future connection requests nice and warm

PROTIPS for finding inspiration:

- The more followers someone has, the more opportunity exists for you to promote your personal brand by engaging with those followers in the comments section.
- The more mutual connections you have with someone, the more likely it is that you share similar interests and travel in similar linkedin circles.



FINDING YOUR VOICE

People have a tendency to overthink content creation on LinkedIn. Even people who have no trouble posting to Facebook, Instagram & Twitter multiple times per day find themselves petrified by the prospect of posting on LinkedIn because they're worried that what they have to say "isn't valuable enough" or that their employer might see it and disapprove.

I get it.

I've been there.

Yes, LinkedIn is a professional platform, which means that you will want to keep your content appropriate for a business audience, but don't confuse "professional" with impersonal. Businesses hire people and people have personality, therefore, business is inherently personal.

Think about it...

- Do you show your personality at work?
- Does your boss know your sense of humor?
- Do your colleagues hear you laugh & see you smiling sometimes?

If the answer to any of those is yes, then that's reason enough to show your personality on LinkedIn. If the people at work care about what you have to say, think highly of you, & appreciate your personality, then why wouldn't tons of other people on the world's largest professional networking platform feel the same?

You might be thinking, "okay fine, but how do I translate my thoughts into posts?"

Keep reading...

PICK YOUR 3Cs: Core Content Categories

Now that you've found your why and your inspiration, it's time to find your voice. To start, it's a good idea to decide on a few core categories you'll create posts about.

I know you may be thinking: "What?! I can barely think of ANYTHING to post and you're telling me to pick a few categories to focus on?!" Yes, but don't worry because it's really not as scary as it seems.

Think back on the exercise you went through in the excuse #1 counterpoint part of the Finding Your Inspiration section of this guide (if you didn't do it, now would be a good time to do so). Think about things you read online for fun - what is it about those topics that fascinate you? Why do you think they're interesting? The answer to these questions make great LinkedIn Posts!

If health & wellness is a really important part of your daily routine and you believe it makes you more successful, talking about that can be a great core content category.

If you lead teams and are passionate about developing people professionally, that's a great core content category.

This is why I tell my clients to follow their fascination. Your personal brand is an amalgamation of the stories you tell about things you're passionate about that light you up.

If you're struggling with it, don't fret because I did too! In fact, the only reason I'm suggesting you try to identify this sooner rather than later is because the only way I determined my 3Cs was after spending a year posting consistently about whatever inspired me in the moment. It wasn't until I exported all of my stats from SHIELD INTELLIGENCE to analyze the hashtags I used on 500+ posts that I began to crystallize my 3Cs.

The sooner you can get clarity on your 3Cs, the easier it will be for you to create content on the fly, but don't stress if you can't come up with something "formal" to start - just go with the flow.

And if you're really struggling with it, I know someone who can help... ;)

LINKEDIN 301: Creating Content

CONTENT TYPES

There are nine (9) content mediums through which creators can publish to LinkedIn. They are:

- Text
- Images
- Video
- Polls
- Documents
- Articles
- LIVE Streaming
- LIVE Audio
- Newsletters

Text

Each text post provides space for a whopping 3,000 characters and the first three (3) lines of text are shown as a preview in the feed before the viewer has to click “see more.” For this reason, you definitely want to be sure to have a compelling “hook” in the first three lines of the post.

And just because there are 3,000 characters doesn't mean you should use them all. As more people create content on LinkedIn, competition for attention increases, so we're now seeing a shift towards shorter, punchier copy that is more bite sized and less daunting to commit to.

This is not to suggest that you should alter your writing style deliberately to fit a certain aesthetic, but be mindful that people's attention spans are short and writing in formats that appeal to your reader may increase the likelihood of them stopping their scroll to read it.

In the last 3.5 years, 39% of my content has been text posts which accounted for 50% of my impressions, 23% of reactions, and 28% of comments from my audience, however, the bulk of that engagement came from 2020 when I was posting almost exclusively text content and it was a lot more prevalent on LinkedIn. As you can see, text-only post engagement has degraded every year since, so you won't find me posting many text-only posts these days.

type	Year	% Posts	% Impressions	% Reactions	% Comments
Text	2020	19.60%	36.06%	11.53%	12.02%
	2021	7.53%	6.51%	6.07%	9.83%
	2022	8.12%	6.24%	4.48%	5.34%
	2023	3.41%	0.94%	0.93%	1.12%
Text Total		38.67%	49.74%	23.01%	28.31%

Images

Images have always been popular on LinkedIn, but in my experience they've historically been suboptimal from a distribution & engagement perspective. As the saying goes: "a picture is worth a thousand words" so naturally people are less likely to spend as much time thinking about an image because it is pretty quick to grasp the message behind it.

As you can see from the chart below, in the last 3.5 years, 35% of my posts included images, which accounted for 19% of my total impressions, 27% of reactions, and 31% of comments.

What that tells me is that image posts don't disproportionately engage my audience the way some other mediums do, however, it's worth noting the uptick in engagement between 2020 - 2023, especially in the comments category. That tells me that I should keep posting images.

type	Year	% Posts	% Impressions	% Reactions	% Comments
Image	2020	6.41%	1.49%	3.02%	3.42%
	2021	5.47%	1.88%	4.11%	5.38%
	2022	11.76%	9.55%	9.51%	10.48%
	2023	10.99%	6.25%	10.60%	11.33%
Image Total		34.63%	19.17%	27.24%	30.61%

Video

LinkedIn has had somewhat of an on-again/off-again relationship with video content over the years. First made available in 2017, LinkedIn used to have a "stories" feature, which was sunset almost as quickly as it was released, and profile video creation capability was sunset in July 2023. Indeed, videos have been slow to catch fire on the platform.

And while creating native video or posting video from external sources remains possible, it doesn't seem like LinkedIn members appreciate it as much as they may on other social platforms. Pre-pandemic, I assumed that had to do with people not wanting to play video volume in their office, but with so many working remotely now, that logic doesn't apply anymore, so you'd expect to see higher levels of engagement on video.

As you can see from the chart below, in the last 3.5 years, 7% of my posts have been video, which accounted for just 2% of impressions, 5% of reactions, and 7% of comments, so no outsized engagement trend there either.

type	Year	% Posts	% Impressions	% Reactions	% Comments
Video (native)	2020	1.83%	0.22%	1.29%	1.94%
	2021	0.83%	0.11%	0.94%	2.18%
	2022	2.48%	1.63%	1.86%	1.73%
	2023	1.71%	0.46%	0.75%	1.04%
Video (native) Total		6.84%	2.41%	4.83%	6.89%

That being said, it's worth noting that:

1. Video impressions are not the same as other post mediums. Someone must view a video for 3 seconds in order for LinkedIn to count it as an impression, whereas other mediums an impression just means your post loaded on someone's feed. In this sense, a video impression is a stronger intent signal than a standard impression on another medium.
2. Visual & voice are very powerful and when building a personal brand they can go a long way. Just because you're not seeing insane levels of engagement doesn't mean there's not value to putting yourself out there in the realest way possible.

I plan to do a lot more video this year and next. We'll see what how the numbers look next year.

Polls

Polls have long been one of my favorite forms of content to create on LinkedIn because:

1. Polls are the only format that enables you to get quantitative feedback from your audience.
2. People love clicking buttons and picking options
3. Polls appeal to people's curiosity – "I wonder what % of people agree with me?"
4. Polls have historically been fantastic conversation starters with my audience.

Personal preference aside, poll performance has flamed out a bit in recent years after LinkedIn seemingly decided to pour gasoline onto that fire from an algorithmic distribution perspective in 2021.

As you can see from the chart below, in the last 3.5 years polls have accounted for 10% of my total posts, yet 20% of impressions, 6% of reactions (makes sense because the "vote" replaces the need for a reaction) and 25% of total comments.

type	Year	% Posts	% Impressions	% Reactions	% Comments
Poll	2020	1.89%	1.26%	0.75%	2.37%
	2021	4.19%	15.09%	3.65%	16.74%
	2022	2.36%	2.16%	0.87%	3.47%
	2023	1.89%	0.98%	0.45%	2.61%
Poll Total		10.32%	19.49%	5.72%	25.20%

Alas, the lionshare of that outsized engagement stems from 2021, the "Year of the Poll" as I call it. LinkedIn members united in their disdain for polls after so many people started flooding the feed with polls for the sake of impressions and they've never really returned to their former glory since (for me, at least).

Documents (a.k.a. Carousels)

What LinkedIn refers to as “documents” the rest of the world identifies as Carousels and these are the new hot thing on LinkedIn as of this writing (August 2023).

Documents are typically PDF slides uploaded for LinkedIn members to click through. You’ve undoubtedly seen these throughout your feed as they are enjoying the same type of algorithmic boost as polls in 2021 (ironically, I used to use documents as a way to highlight great comments my network would leave on polls I’d run every Saturday.)

Documents are useful because they give you the ability to get really creative with the visual appeal of your content in ways that other mediums cannot. Some people are making really nice, scroll-stopping documents that are real scroll-stoppers you can’t help but click through. Of course there are also those who abuse this medium for clickbait. Don’t be one of those people.

Documents account for just 2% of my total content and .06% in 2023, so there isn’t much to report on from an analytical perspective, however as you can see from the chart below, engagement on documents typically overperforms relative to the number of posts created.

type	Year	% Posts	% Impressions	% Reactions	% Comments
Document	2020	0.65%	1.38%	0.53%	0.78%
	2021	1.18%	2.13%	0.91%	1.79%
	2022	0.35%	0.58%	0.22%	0.43%
	2023	0.06%	0.03%	0.02%	0.06%
Document Total		2.25%	4.12%	1.68%	3.07%

Articles

Articles are links to content on other websites and they get a bad rap on LinkedIn because the popular narrative is that including links to 3rd-party websites decreases algorithmic distribution of your post. This is why you’ll often see people creating posts referencing an article and saying “link in comments.”

Representatives from LinkedIn have repeatedly stated that the platform does not dampen distribution of posts with 3rd-party links, but the LinkedIn populace still seems skeptical and based on the chart below, they’ve good reason to be. I’ve never seen great engagement on articles.

type	Year	% Posts	% Impressions	% Reactions	% Comments
Article	2020	1.19%	0.12%	0.46%	0.27%
	2021	0.59%	0.30%	0.45%	0.31%
	2022	1.07%	0.56%	0.35%	0.25%
	2023	1.72%	0.36%	0.76%	0.52%
Article Total		4.56%	1.34%	2.02%	1.35%

That said, articles are useful to share as part of your personal brand because they are a good indicator of the types of topics you read about and where you get your information. Just because someone doesn't react to your post sharing an article doesn't mean that the fact you shared it didn't deliver value to someone, or better yet, impress them.

On the never ending personal branding journey, showing people what you like to read is never a bad thing. Vanity metrics be damned when it comes to this content medium.

LIVE (Streaming & Audio)

Linkedin Live streaming & Audio events are a great way to get your personal brand out into the world. Nothing like seeing a face and hearing a voice to develop affinity from your audience.

Linkedin Live streaming

LinkedIn Live is useful for hosting conversations with other people or going live on your own and sharing knowledge with the rest of the community. You will be able to see event analytics for your live streaming events after they conclude, and they do remain in your activity feed, which means you can also pull them into your featured section if you'd like - particularly useful if your LinkedIn Live event is something you're really proud of and want people to see. LinkedIn Live streams typically get decent engagement as well, especially from first degree connections who see you in real-time.

Just remember that in order to do a LinkedIn Live stream, you'll need to use a 3rd-party tool like Restream.io or Streamyard. Alternatively, you can share a link to an event hosted through another platform like Zoom or Vimeo, which will then be shared on LinkedIn for others to join, but the setup process for that is pretty labor intensive, so I don't advise it.

Linkedin Audio Events

Audio Events are ephemeral, audio-only conversations that you can schedule for as little as 15-minutes to as long as three hours. Audio events are convenient because you don't have to worry about your appearance, since the only thing people will see is your profile picture.

Once you go live, you can hold court yourself, talking about whatever your heart desires, or you can bring people "up on stage" to ask questions or participate in the conversation. You can also move them back down if you wish once they've finished speaking, which is common best practice. It's worth noting that whether you're hosting or speaking on stage at someone else's audio event, these are great for increasing your follower count.

Analytics are made available after the event ends, which is helpful, but the downside to LinkedIn Audio is that it's not recorded so you cannot feature the conversation anywhere or break it up into different audio clips for use elsewhere.

For both Live and Audio events, it's advisable to schedule the event 7-10 days out and post a few reminders leading up to it because LinkedIn's user experience for discovering audio events isn't the most intuitive. You'll also want to sign up for a Canva account or something similar so you can create those magnetic cover images.

CONTENT PLANNING

By and large there are two kinds of content creators on LinkedIn: those who plan and those who don't. Neither is better than the other, it's completely a matter of personal preference and style.

Some creators come up with content themes weeks in advance and then carve out a block of time to churn out all the content they plan to post about said topic. Others prefer to fly by the seat of their pants and write when inspiration hits.

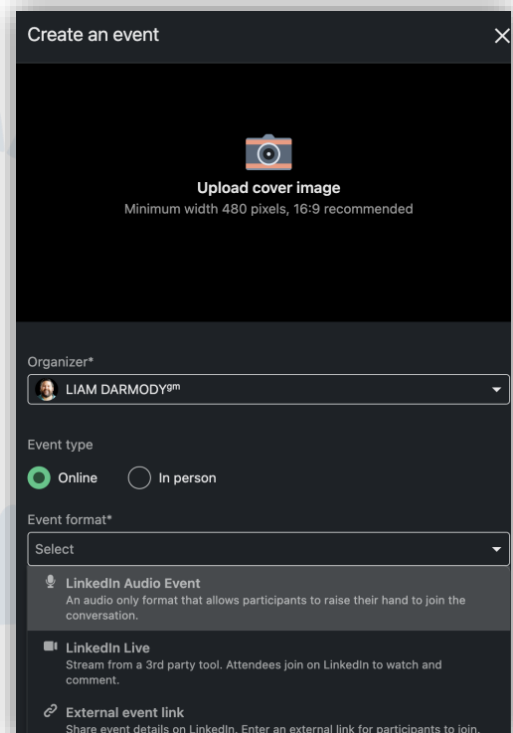
Personally, I'm the latter. I have a notepad on my computer where I jot down ideas or write posts when I'm feeling inspired that I'll revisit to post another day, but that's the extent of it for me. I've tried to create content in advance and plan out my "editorial calendar" right down to the day & hour, but it's never felt natural to me. And if there's one thing that hinders your enjoyment of the content creation process, it's forcing yourself to do something unnaturally.

Again, DO NOT OVERTHINK! Just do what works well for you.

HASHTAGS

Hashtags are a way to classify content on social networks to make it easier for the right content to be found by the people looking for it. It's also a great way for these platforms to get a sense for what their users are most interested in.

From a personal branding perspective, hashtags help you find content & inspiration through other people's posts ([you down with O.P.P?](#)) and increase the likelihood that your content will find its way into the feeds of others who will be interested in & engage with it.



For the longest time, the rule was that you should never use more than 3 hashtags on a single post because the LinkedIn algorithm would penalize posts with 4 or more by limiting distribution (a.k.a. views). As of late 2023, best practice is to use no more than 3-5 relevant hashtags, if any at all.

While it's logical to assume that using the maximum number of hashtags on posts without being penalized by the mighty LinkedIn algorithm would maximize distribution, there are several other things to consider before flooring it full speed on the hashtag highway. Here are some key of those key considerations:

Use popular hashtags with lots of followers.

The whole point of using hashtags is to get your content in front of an audience that is most interested in that topic. I can use “#StuffLiamSays” on every single post if I want to but since that has no followers, it's all but pointless to do so.

Use popular hashtags that “make sense” logically.

One of the biggest mistakes many people make with hashtags is focusing more on follower size vs. topical relevance. Let's have a look at the top 9 most followed hashtags on LinkedIn:

#india	67,965,431
#innovation	38,757,777
#management	36,111,180
#humanresources	33,423,918
#digitalmarketing	27,505,115
#technology	26,226,119
#creativity	25,353,608
#future	24,724,159
#futurism	23,741,113

When you consider that these hashtags have a combined following of 303,808,420, it's easy to understand why some people might think it's a great idea to just use all 9 of them on every post to maximize their reach, but the best content creators employ a longer term strategy & realize that RELEVANCE matters more than follower count.

If you're posting about #europe, which has 2.6 million followers, you can use #india as a hashtag if you really want to, but if you had to pick between the two, I'd pick #europe all day every day because the odds are that your content will make its way to people who care about Europe.

If you're posting about #softwareengineering, which has 6.6 million followers, resist the urge to use the #humanresources or #digitalmarketing or #creativity hashtags. Do, however, consider using #technology and #innovation, as they are adjacent interest categories.

The bottom line is, be strategic about what hashtags you choose to use, opt for relevance over follower count, and play the long game. You're building a personal brand to last as long as you do, so you've got plenty of time to let it grow organically. There's no reason to rush it for the sake of vanity metrics.

I have a list of 500+ hashtags with their total counts as of 2023 that I share with my coaching clients. In case you're interested...

Create your own personal hashtag

Most people assume that following someone on a social media platform means that they're pretty much guaranteed to see all of the content created by the person followed. I'm not sure how it works on other platforms, but I know for certain that's not how it works on LinkedIn, which typically distributes content to a very small subset of your first-degree connections and followers.

To combat this, many people have chosen to create their own hashtags and use them on all of their posts so that it's easy for people to follow and/or find the posts of said creator. Mine was #LiamOnLinkedIn but I rarely used it and now nothing shows up when I search for it, so that's all I have to say about that.

TO TAG OR NOT TO TAG?

That is the question I get asked over and over again. My answer is always the same: **it depends** because it's completely subjective.

Personally, I only tag people that I a) know, b) know won't mind being tagged, c) know will likely respond.

Notice the operative word in that sentence? (KNOW!)

I know it can be tempting when you're just starting out to tag content creators with large followings in hopes that they'll drop what they're doing to come and check out your latest post, but unless you can confidently say "yes" to A-C above, I'd resist that urge at all costs because:

1. First impressions matter and tagging people you don't know as a growth hack can appear spammy & desperate, which may actually prevent you from getting to KNOW them if you ever try.
2. Most creators with lots of followers won't see it anyways because they are overwhelmed by notifications or have them turned off.

What I would suggest doing instead is trying to get to know some of your favorite content creators individually through direct messages, or by sending a quick video intro stating how much you appreciate them & asking for a few minutes of their time to help out a new content creator. You'd be amazed how helpful a conversation like that can be in forging connection.

The majority of people who create content consistently on LinkedIn genuinely want to support others, but they don't like feeling "used" for their audience size, so be thoughtful in your approach.

EMOJIS & GIFS

Five years ago if you had asked me whether or not it was acceptable to use emojis or GIFs on LinkedIn, I would have probably said no, but my thinking has since evolved, just as these two mediums of expression have. Nowadays all popular B2B communication tools like Slack or MS Teams enable & even encourage use of emojis & GIFs, and so there's no reason LinkedIn should be different.

That said, there is such a thing as too much of a good thing, so it's wise to be mindful of your target audience & the tone you're trying to convey with your personal brand.

HYPERLINKS

Before buzzy terms like "content creation" & "personal branding" became all the rage, the LinkedIn feed was largely dominated by content created and published elsewhere on the web.

Companies used LinkedIn as a place to share press that their employees could then share with their networks, and professionals used it as a place to share industry-specific articles that made them look well informed. As a result, my feed was just littered with articles from Forbes, Inc. Magazine, Fortune, Fast Company, Harvard Business Review, etc. etc.

And that was fine back then because people weren't thinking about LinkedIn as a place to create content reflective of their own personal brand or engage in conversation. No one really paid attention to vanity metrics such as views, reactions, comments, or even followers back then.

Once that started to change, however, people started to hypothesize that including a link to another website resulted in limited distribution (impressions) of said post & any subsequent engagement one might be hoping for. As such, those in the know would opt out of including links in posts, instead placing them in the comments section & instructing their audience to check there for the link. The problem with this approach is that LinkedIn doesn't allow for comments to be "pinned" to the top of a comment section, so the link gets lost amidst all the other comments.

As of late 2023, the most recent studies conducted by LinkedIn experts suggest that including links to other websites in the post no longer hinder its ability to garner substantial views or engagement. That said, many LinkedIn experts are skeptical and continue to limit their use of hyperlinks from other websites in their content, opting to drop in comments or post -> edit -> paste the link -> save the post, as the algo supposedly only registers contents of the initial post when testing for distribution, rather than subsequent revisions that may include links.

As the sayings go, “old habits die hard” and “it’s hard to teach old dogs new tricks.” I’m certainly in that category myself, and as a general best practice avoid including links to other websites when initially publishing a post.

BUT... (yes, there’s always a but...)

Remember that distribution and engagement aren’t everything. When building a personal brand, sharing things you find interesting, insightful, or valuable from around the web with your network is a good idea because it shows them where you get your information and how you think about it.

LINKEDIN 401: Engage & Grow Your Network

One of the best and fastest ways to grow your personal brand on LinkedIn is to focus on engaging with your connections, followers, and other content creators whom you follow.

It's no secret that LinkedIn wants to be the platform upon which the world's largest & longest business conversations are happening, but due to their long standing reputation as a mere utility for storing connections & online resumes amongst the majority of its user base, they've got a ways to go. But they're going – LinkedIn as a search term has increased 295% since 2010!

In fact, content on the LinkedIn feed receives about 9 billion impressions per week, but only 3 million users (out of the more than 900 million) share content on a weekly basis. This means that only about 1% of LinkedIn's 260 million monthly users share posts, and those 3 million or so users net the 9 billion impressions (source: kinsta).

If you're striving to grow as the 1% of content creators on the platform, one of the best ways to do that is to engage with the content of others doing the same.

Engage Existing Network

Chances are that the people you've already connected with on LinkedIn think pretty highly of you, or at the very least, don't think negatively about you. Therefore, interacting with content shared by your existing network is a great way to get into the oh-so-important habit of engaging with other people's content, which is essential for growth on LinkedIn.

Find the direct connections in your network who share content, ring the notification bell on their profile so that LinkedIn knows you want to see their content in your feed, and be sure to engage anytime you see it with a reaction, thoughtful comment, and if you're really feeling generous, a repost, which is the highest form of flattery and most selfless action you can take on LinkedIn.

And don't be afraid to reach out to that person you haven't spoken to in a while and see if they want to jump on a quick zoom (or you can even just schedule a video call within LinkedIn's very own DMs) to catch up. Taking conversations offline is a great exercise.

Engage the Engaged

Have you ever seen LinkedIn's "Join the Conversation" slogan? They started saying it a while back and I'll admit that when I first saw it, I was confused. "What conversation?" But that was then (2015ish?) and this is now, and now LinkedIn is very much a place for conversation.

In fact, the single biggest mistake you can make on LinkedIn is posting and ghosting. If you want to build a strong personal brand through content creation and have an engaged, loyal following, you absolutely must engage with the people who engage with your content, especially those who leave comments.

No matter how busy you are or how large your following gets, engage the engaged. No one likes feeling like things are a one-way street, and unless you're someone with millions of followers, you can probably find 5-10 minutes per day to respond to people who engage with your content and establish connections. Goes back to having time vs. prioritizing it. Prioritize it!

Connect with Connections

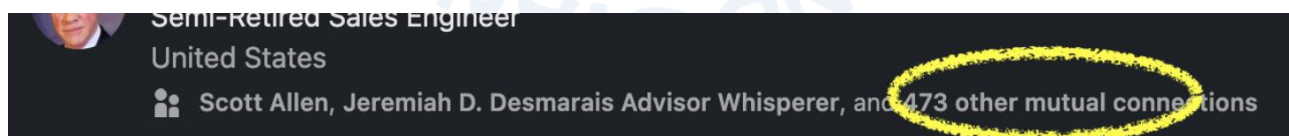
Everyone on LinkedIn can have a maximum of 30,000 connections. The connection is a two-way street kind of relationship. If you connect with someone, LinkedIn assumes that your ties are somewhat strong and that you want to see that person's content in your feed. Same on their end.

Many years ago, people would accept connection requests from anyone and everyone in a rush to hit 30,000 connections because LinkedIn used to use that as the trigger to surface the "+Follow" call-to-action atop your posts in the feed for 2nd & 3rd degree connections. But now that Creator Mode turns that on automatically, that's no longer necessary. Nor does it make sense.

While I've always found the dichotomy b/w connections vs. followers a bit confusing, there is a difference between the two and you should try to reserve connections for people you actually want to have a two-way relationship with.

When sending connection requests, it's wise to include a personalized note (300 characters or less) if for no other reason than because most people do not do that and doing so will set you apart from the rest.

Once connected, it's never a bad idea to look through the connections of your new connection for others who seem like someone you'd be interested in following or connecting with. Especially useful because you can see how many mutual connections you have with them.



Appreciate your Followers

Followers are a one-way street. When you follow someone, you're telling LinkedIn that you're interested in their content, but there's no signal to LinkedIn that they are interested in seeing yours.

It can be advantageous to follow someone whose radar you want to be on so that you can start to see and engage with their content, thereby building some awareness of your personal brand and making for a warm connection request in the future.

And as far as people following you are concerned, what a compliment, right? Make sure you're not taking the fact that someone followed you lightly. Review their profile, see if they are someone you'd like to follow or connect with and start a conversation. Someone following you is a strong signal that they're interested in who you are and what you have to say. Cherish that beyond the ego boost it gives you. Look for ways to establish connection with those followers, as they can be your biggest supporters and brand evangelists.

Pay Attention to Profile Views

Another really unique feature about LinkedIn is that it provides you with the ability to see who has checked out your profile, which most social platforms do not do. I've paid for LinkedIn Premium for as long as I can remember because I want to be able to see as much as I can.

There are two kinds of profile views: those from 1st degree connections, and those from 2nd or 3rd degree connections. In either scenario, a profile view indicates that someone was intrigued by something enough to visit your profile, which is a positive signal.

When a 1st degree connection views my profile but doesn't send a message, I will usually send them a message with a GIF of Forrest Gump or Napoleon Dynamite waving. More often than not, that gets a laugh and a brief exchange occurs reconnecting the two of you. Sometimes it leads to having a longer conversation via phone or zoom. Either way, it's nice to have that touchpoint.

When a 2nd or 3rd degree connection views my profile, I'll typically view theirs and then follow or invite them to connect if I think it makes sense to do so. You never know someone's motivations for checking your profile and not saying anything, but one reason could be intimidation or shyness, so by reaching out to them you're helping them feel more comfortable, which is a great starting point for a new connection.

You Down with O.P.P.?

No, I'm not talking about the Naughty By Nature song. C'mon, get your mind out of the gutter. OTHER PEOPLE'S POSTS is what it means to me, and it's an essential part of relationship building on LinkedIn.

I don't care what anyone says: when someone posts on LinkedIn, they are hoping that post will get tons of impressions, reactions, comments, and reposts. Of course, "tons" is subjective in the world of social media, but at the root of every post is a hope that the flickering light turns into a raging fire.

Being a good LinkedIn citizen means supporting the few, the proud, the posters whenever you feel inclined to do so, and sometimes, even when you don't. A very large portion of LinkedIn's membership lurks rather than engages, so as someone who hopes to build an engaged, loyal audience for your personal brand, it's good karma to help others do the same.

Now I'm not suggesting you go liking anything and everything (remember, every action you take can be broadcast to your network), but if you see a post that resonates with you, take a little extra time before scrolling on to the next one to react and drop a thoughtful comment, especially if it's someone you know & want to show support for.

On the flip side, there are many creators on the LinkedIn platform who have massive followings and get a metric ton of engagement - thousands of reactions, hundreds of comments, dozens of reposts. It's smart to identify which of these creators post things you appreciate & find value in, and then prioritize leaving your two cents on it when they post - ideally as close to the time they post it as possible.

Why?

Because if you're one of the first people to comment on a post that gets 1,000,000 impressions and you leave a thoughtful comment, your post will be more likely to receive reactions from others who see the post after you left your comment, therefore bumping it up to the top of the comments section for all to see. This can result in mini-conversations beneath your comment that lead to connections or new followers.

And while I don't suggest commenting on large influencer's posts purely for the strategic benefits, it's definitely a useful way to amplify your personal brand to an engaged audience.

Say No to PODS

Engagement pods have been a thing on social media since the beginning, and LinkedIn is no different. There are many people who join "mastermind groups" and "support communities" in which a bunch of strangers agree to react & comment on each other's posts shortly after it goes live to try and boost it via the algorithm.

It used to be that the engagement received within the first hour or two of a post - dubbed the "golden hour" - would be a key determining factor in the level of algorithmic distribution a post received. And while LinkedIn appears to be combatting the engagement pod behavior directly by distributing posts over a longer time horizon, resulting in a slower build of impressions over time, engagement pods will always find new ways to try and hack the algo.

But here's the thing about engagement pods: they don't actually benefit you in any long-term way because the engagement you are receiving from them is entirely manufactured.

I know dozens of people who went from getting hundreds of reactions & comments in the hey day because they were part of engagement pods and as soon as they stopped, so did their engagement, which begs the question: what was the point?

If you're serious about building an authentic personal brand and establishing meaningful connection with your network in the process, just say no to engagement pods.

They are purely a hack intended to inflate egos and game the system, and you simply cannot hack authentic connection & relationship building.

Say No to Automation

The upside to LinkedIn having plenty of organic reach is that it gives anyone who has something to say a chance to build an engaged audience if they want to. The downside to all that organic reach is that where there's growth opportunity, there are also growth hackers who come up with all sorts of creative ways to achieve maximum visibility with minimum effort.

While I'm normally a proponent of efficiency through automation and systems (I did spend nearly two decades in revenue operations roles before going out on my own, after all), but when it comes to building an authentic personal brand through content creation, there simply is no hack. You have to invest time and effort into establishing connection and building relationships.

So please, I beg of you, avoid the temptation to "growth hack" here. It's not worth it.

Automation tools violate LinkedIn's terms of service and getting caught using them could result in you losing your profile. That's not a risk worth taking because you can't just spin up another account like you can on other platforms.

There's only one you.

Don't play games with the most legitimate online account you'll ever have representing that by trying to cut some corners for vanity metrics.

Again, it's just not worth it.

SUMMARY

I know this was a lot to take in and if you made it this far, you've got a better attention span than I do. I figured it might be best to synthesize this doc into a quick one sheet, so here's my list of things I hope you'll take away from this guide, if nothing else:

- ☐ Profile pictures are important. Be intentional about it and pick a good one!
- ☐ Create a banner to set yourself apart from the millions who don't use one. Customize it.
- ☐ Take your headline seriously and be very intentional about the words you use for it.
- ☐ Turn on Creator Mode, even if you don't consider yourself a "Creator."
- ☐ Every action you take is like a micro ad for your personal brand. Act accordingly.
- ☐ Use the "Custom Action" (a.k.a. link) on your profile to your advantage!
- ☐ Populate your featured section with things you're most proud of.
- ☐ Set your activity section to default to the content mediums you create most.
- ☐ Pay attention to analytics because what gets measured almost always gets better.
- ☐ Select Top Skills for Skills & About sections + every job you've got listed.
- ☐ Create an About section that actually tells people what you're about. Have fun with it & show your personality. People should finish reading it with a good sense of who you are.
- ☐ Add contextual narrative to your work experience - don't just copy/paste your resume.
- ☐ Take advantage of LinkedIn Learning courses & show completed ones on your profile
- ☐ Endorse & recommend others and don't hesitate to ask others to do the same for you.
- ☐ Follow your fascination (people, content, hashtags) to fill your feed with inspiration.
- ☐ Find your voice by establishing your 3Cs - Core Content Categories
- ☐ Create content that comes most naturally to you - writer? Write. Video person? Video.
- ☐ Vision & Voice is powerful - LinkedIn Live Events are a great way to gain exposure.
- ☐ Don't overthink your content creation process. Some write on the fly, others plan ahead. There's no right or wrong. Do what you think will make you post more consistently.
- ☐ Use relevant hashtags if you plan to use any and don't use more than 3-5.
- ☐ Be deliberate and self-aware when tagging people. You don't want to be spammy.
- ☐ Pay attention to interest signals - people who react & comment on your content, view your profile, follow or invite you to connect are all opportunities to build relationships.
- ☐ Say no to automation tools, engagement pods & growth hacks. They're not worth it.
- ☐ Do not post and ghost
- ☐ Always engage with the engaged
- ☐ Get down with O.P.P. - engage with other people's posts!
- ☐ Do not overthink your content, your value, what others think.
- ☐ Be your true, authentic self.
- ☐ Be consistent & patient.
- ☐ Have fun.

LIAMS BRAND STAND

THE END.

If you made it this far, I have to commend and thank you.

As you can tell, I've put a lot of time and energy into learning about LinkedIn over the years, and I'm honored that you have chosen to invest time into hearing what I had to say.

I wish you nothing but the best adventure on my favorite platform and hope that you will build a personal brand that enables you to manifest as much serendipity as I have on LinkedIn.

If I can ever be of help to you personally or anyone you know, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Hi5,
LD

