

10 LinkedIn Mistakes You Shouldn't Make

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LinkedIn is the place to not only find others but also to be found as a **job seeker**. And that is why you need a LinkedIn Profile that not only helps you get found but also will entice people to contact you once they view your profile. I see many people making fundamental mistakes as *job seekers* that actually work against them in this aspect. If you're going to spend time putting together a LinkedIn profile, I assume you want to maximize your chances of being contacted by the right people, right?

With that in mind, I have created an easy-to-understand list of a few things to check for with my reasoning. Just like any website owner, you want your LinkedIn profile to stick out and be found! As a *job* applicant, you want the same thing, so read on.

Enjoy my LinkedIn Profile Tips!

1. Not Displaying Your Personal Photo

It all really comes down to having social media credibility or not. There are too many fake profiles on LinkedIn, so you want to show that you are real. If you have taken the time to complete your LinkedIn profile, why wouldn't you display your photo? It just raises too many potential questions. And company logos or photos of pets obviously have no value here

2. LinkedIn Profile Headline is Not Branded Enough

See that space underneath your name? That is your "Professional" or Profile Headline. It will appear in search results next to your name, as well as next to any questions you ask or answer. It is, in essence, your elevator speech in a few words. Are you just putting your title and company name here? Don't! This is the place where you need to appeal to anyone who finds you in a search result to reach out and look at your profile. Your Profile Headline is the single most important piece of real estate on your LinkedIn Profile, and you need to brand it as such. This really ties into personal branding as a job applicant.

3. LinkedIn Status Update is Not Appealing

This is that "What are you working on?" box that I refer to as a "Status Update." Assuming someone finds you and looks at your profile, chances are they are going to be looking at what you write here simply because that it appears just underneath your Headline Profile. What do you write here? Many people in transition note that they are looking for a **job** here. What do you use your LinkedIn Status

Update for? It is part of your branding exercise, and it should be something appealing that will both inform the reader of your latest activities as well as hopefully add to, not subtract from, your LinkedIn Brand.**4. Don't List Enough Companies You Worked At Or Schools Attended**

One of the ways you are found on LinkedIn is through searches on company names or schools. If you are only listing your current company and/or not even displaying your college, you are missing out on potentially being found. Check this out: I did my Junior year of college abroad in Beijing nearly 20 years ago. I had been out of touch with all of the 15 or so Americans that were there that year. Two of those 15 have found me on LinkedIn! And another high school friend who I lost touch with found me this week on LinkedIn. They would not have found me had I not listed my Junior year abroad school and high school name on my profile. Companies are even more important in that there are potentially more colleagues that may be trying to find you or recruiters trying to network with you! You may be missing out!

5. Not Having Three LinkedIn Recommendations

This is the same as not having your personal photo on your LinkedIn profile. Why? When you sign up for LinkedIn and first fill out your profile, LinkedIn recommends that you write three LinkedIn Recommendations. You need to do this in order to get your LinkedIn Profile to 100% Completion. **Job postings** on LinkedIn similarly require three LinkedIn Recommendations. These recommendations can only work in your favor, so why don't you have at least three of them?

6. Too Few Connections

This is a topic for debate, but too many people have too few connections on their LinkedIn Profile, and thus are not getting found. The idea is simple: when you do a search you will see results from your network. And vice-versa. So the more connections you have the more search results you will appear in pure and simple. Combining this is the fact that Windmill Networking is about finding value in online networking with people that you don't know. So what are you waiting for?

7. Not Listing Three Websites

LinkedIn gives you the ability to list three websites on your profile. Are you taking advantage of it? Do you have a Twitter profile or other social networking profile that you want to advertise? Company website? A blog that you enjoy reading? Anything that you would want associated with yourself should be listed here. You will be adding to the search engine optimization of your own websites just by the fact that you list them here!

8. Not Claiming Your Personal URL

When you sign up to LinkedIn you are provided a public URL which you can then include on your email signature or wherever else you want to lead people to your LinkedIn Profile from. You can customize

this when you edit your profile. Claiming your name here is one of the first things you should have done on LinkedIn. For instance, I can memorize my LinkedIn Profile URL, which is www.linkedin.com/in/nealschaffer, because I customized the last text to “nealschaffer.” If you have a common name, make sure you claim your LinkedIn URL before others do! As a **job applicant** you can definitely stand out with this little tool.

9. No Branded Summary Rich with Keywords

Assuming that someone finds you in a search result, likes your Profile Headline, and isn't scared away by your Status Update, the next most important part of your profile will be your Summary. This is the chance to fully brand yourself as a **job seeker** and ensure that any keywords that you want associated with yourself are found here. You also want to write something compelling, just as you would in the Executive Summary of your resume. This is your stage to tell the world who you are and what you can do! Utilize it to your fullest advantage!

10. No Job Descriptions

Even if you've listed positions at companies that you previously held, it means nothing if you don't have any *job* descriptions. Job descriptions provide you the perfect opportunity to pepper your profile with keywords that will help you get found. Why aren't you taking advantage of this?

Did I miss any that you'd like to share? Let me know! And if you didn't make any of the above mistakes, congratulations! Your LinkedIn Profile is in good shape

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