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# LINKEDIN



Durham College Career Development  
[hired.durhamcollege.ca](http://hired.durhamcollege.ca)

# Creating Your LinkedIn Profile

## What is a LinkedIn profile?

Your LinkedIn profile is a professional home page for you to manage your personal brand. A LinkedIn profile is a great way for you to let people know who you are, what you stand for, and what you're interested in. Your profile will be your personal storyboard where people can find you and stay updated on your activity, so make sure your profile is complete and representative of you. Your profile is fully visible to all the viewers that you have given permission to through your privacy settings. You can control what appears on your profile, notifications to your network, and your profile privacy preferences.

## Why have a LinkedIn profile:

- **Manage your professional brand** – You can define and develop how other members view your professional experience and qualifications. Since you will have complete control over your profile and its visibility, you can customize it to fit your needs. Your customized profile will help recruiters and other members understand your professional personality. You can add various sections to your profile to showcase your skills and expertise. A complete LinkedIn profile will increase your discoverability and profile search appearances.
- **Create opportunities for you** – People and organizations globally use LinkedIn, so a LinkedIn profile will help you get noticed. An updated profile is a great way to ensure that you can be found by the right people at the right time. It's also an excellent way to find job opportunities and connect with recruiters. Once you have completed your profile, you'll be more equipped to find jobs on LinkedIn.
- **Build your network and track your professional milestones** – All of your professional achievements (new job, work anniversary, promotion, etc.) can be recorded and displayed on your LinkedIn profile. It will help you showcase your professional experience and achievements to other members who view your profile. An updated profile opens the door to meeting new members and making connections.

Getting your LinkedIn profile working harder for you doesn't have to take up hours of your time. Try working through the concepts below, building from one to the other – and you will find that you can make progress quickly, even if you are just able to set aside a few minutes over a lunch break or in the evenings. Once you are flexing the full advantages of your LinkedIn profile, you will be amazed what a difference it can make to both you and potentially, your brand. Expanding your brand identity, increasing job matches and improving the quality of the information in your feed are all benefits.

## Important Tips

### Check for spelling and grammar

One thing that always lets people down is poor spelling. Just remember, in a survey cited by Susan Britton Whitcomb in her book *Resumé Magic*, "83.3% of recruiters cited typos and misspelling as their no.1 pet peeve closely followed by poor grammar (80.6%)". [Click here for an in-depth article on how spelling and grammar can impact your job seeking!](#)

### Keep it clear, concise and correct tenses

Avoid using four words when one will do. Use the present tense for your current job and the past tense for previous jobs.

### Declare war on buzzwords

Buzzwords are adjectives that are used so often in LinkedIn headlines and summaries that they become almost completely meaningless. LinkedIn's regular rankings of [the most over-used buzzwords](#) include terms like 'specialized', 'leadership', 'focused', 'strategic', 'experienced', 'passionate', 'expert', 'creative' and 'innovative'. If you choose to use these words, then demonstrate how you have applied them to your experience.

### Show, don't tell!

You must demonstrate and showcase your skills when you are describing yourself. Use **accomplishment statements** wherever possible. An accomplishment statement allows you to describe your skills, experience and shows how you can help future employers. You do this by providing examples of your past accomplishments and achievements in the workplace.

## Action verb + skill and/or task(s) = result(s)

### Examples:

- Reviewed (action verb) the resumé's of 425+ students and alumni, (task) resulting in increased successful employment outcomes for those who chose to self-report (result).
- Initiated and led (action verbs) marketing outreach and communication efforts to five community college departments (task) leading to an increase in weekly student traffic in the career centre (result).
- Spearheaded (action verb) the creation of five new career and job-search success-related workshops on campus and in the community, (task) resulting in outreach and education of 500+ students and community members (result).
- Suggested (action verb) a change in the customer service response process for staff in the call centre (task), leading to a 50% increase in customer satisfaction (result).

## LinkedIn Sections

LinkedIn constantly updates their platform including sections and functionality to help professionals stay connected and for job seekers to find new opportunities. The list below is subject to change, please follow the [LinkedIn blog](#) to stay informed.

### Name

Use the name that is listed on your resumé to ensure consistency throughout your brand. This way employers can easily locate your profile. To avoid people mispronouncing your name. LinkedIn has removed this linguistic barrier of addressing names of professionals hailing from different corners of the world. This short audio feature can be found on the profile page, where you can record your name's exact pronunciation. It can be heard by anyone who taps on the audio icon on your profile.

### Personal URL

You can create a [personal URL](#) on your profile to show up better in search engine results which can also be added as a hyperlink on your resumé. In addition, you can create a badge for your public profile to be added to your online resumé, blog, or website from the [public profile settings](#) page.

### Profile Picture

The profile picture creates your first impression on LinkedIn – it's how people are introduced to you and it determines their impressions from the start. There are some great posts explaining [how to pick the right profile picture on LinkedIn](#) – but here are some quick tips to start with: make sure the picture is recent and looks like you, make sure your face takes up around 60% of it (long-distance shots don't stand out), wear what you would like to wear to work, and smile with your eyes (smize!)

An "open to work" frame will make it evident that you can be contacted for suitable job opportunities.

### Cover Story

Want to give your LinkedIn profile an extra personal touch? LinkedIn has implemented a new feature called 'Cover Story' that can do just that. Watch this [video](#) to see multiple examples of great Cover Story examples!

### Background Picture

Your background photo is the second visual element at the top of your profile page. It grabs people's attention, sets the context and shows a little more about what matters to you. More than anything, the right background photo helps your page stand out, attract attention and stay memorable. Check out background photos of influencers in your industry for inspiration! You can find copy-right-free images [here](#).

## Headline

You have 120 characters – so make them count. There’s no rule that says the description at the top of your profile page has to be just a job title. Use the headline field to say a bit more about how you see your role, why you do what you do, and what makes you tick. Consider these best practices while creating your headline:

- Showcase your speciality.
- Be specific and creative.
- Make it keyword rich

## About (formerly Summary)

The summary is your chance to tell your own story in the first person – so avoid using it to list your skills or the job titles you have had. Try to bring to life why those skills matter – and the difference they can make to the people you work with. Invest some time, try a few drafts, and ask people you know to review it. This is your most personal piece of content marketing – and it is worth the effort.

## Experience

The profile, headline, picture and summary are the first things that someone will view. The goal is to encourage viewers to scroll down to your work experience and ensures that your past and current experiences are highlighted. Starting with your current position, write it in reverse chronological order (most recent to past positions). Depending on your age, career level and frequency of your job changes, you might have more or fewer entries in this section. While adding a work experience to your profile, consider these best practices:

- Always link your job to the company page on LinkedIn.
- Add specific job title.
- Add description to each work experience.
- Use keywords in your description.

## Education

Your education section says a lot about you, especially to the potential employer and your former classmates who are looking for you to reconnect. While adding a school name in your education section, consider these tips:

- Enter any extracurricular activities you participated while attending that school/college in **Activities and Societies** text box.
- Enter any awards or honors you received from the school/college in **Description**
- Add rich media such as photo, video, link or documents to showcase your proud moments while attending that school.

## Volunteer Experience

Highlighting your care and involvement in community, environmental and other causes on your LinkedIn profile gives viewers a more well-rounded perspective of your interests and values.

You can add the organization, your role, the cause it supports, dates of your participation and a description about the event!

## Skills & Endorsements

You want your skills section to tell others who you are and what you can do – scroll through the [list of skills](#) and identify those that are relevant to you. LinkedIn will also provide some suggested skills based on your profile. Doing so helps to substantiate the description in your **Headline and About** section. This provides an opportunity for others to endorse you. Make yourself easily searchable to employers by including key skills. These are the best practices that you can consider while adding skills to this section:

- Focus on industry-relevant skills.
- Order the lists such that the most important skills are on the top.

Reach out to people whose endorsement you would really value such as, project team members, field placement/co-op supervisors, coworkers, managers and possibly faculty. Endorsements from other members substantiate your skills and increase your credibility. How do you get endorsed on LinkedIn? For starters, go through your network and identify connections who you feel genuinely deserve an endorsement from you – that often prompts people to return the favour. Don't be afraid to reach out with a polite message asking for endorsements for a few key skills as well. Remember though – relevance matters.

## Skills Assessment

The skills assessment is an online test created by LinkedIn that enables you to demonstrate the level of your skills and display a Verified Skills badge on your profile. Displaying proof of your abilities can potentially strengthen your personal brand. Using this assessment is entirely voluntary, and you can retake the tests as often as you like before showing that you have passed.

## Services

Services is a LinkedIn feature that helps consultants, freelancers and those working for smaller businesses to showcase the range of services that they offer. Filling out the Services section of your profile can boost your visibility in search results.

## Recommendations

Endorsements give people viewing your profile a quick, visual sense of what you are valued for. Recommendations take things a step further. They are personal testimonials written to illustrate the experience of working with you. There is a handy drop-down menu in the Recommendations section of your profile that makes it easy to reach out to specific contacts and request recommendations. Take the time to think about who you would most value a recommendation from – and personalize your request. It's worth the extra effort.

## Accomplishments

LinkedIn offers you to add accomplishments in 9 different sections. These are:

- **Certification:** Add any certificates you earned related to your current profession.

- **Course:** Add the list of all the courses you took to learn different skills.
- **Honour and awards:** Showcase all the honours and awards you earned.
- **Language:** Let the profile visitor know which languages you know. You can even add the proficiency level of the entered languages.
- **Patent:** Do you have any patent rights? If so, it is the best place to show the patents you own. Don't forget to add the description of the respective patents.
- **Project:** Ever been a part of any projects? Add the list of all the projects you were part of with the complete details and description of the respective projects. Be aware of names, content, non-disclosure agreements or any material that may be confidential.
- **Publication:** Ever published a book or article on famous websites? Just add the title of the book or article, publisher name, date, URL and description in the publication section to let others know your work.
- **Test Score:** Appeared in any competitive examinations? If so, enter the test name, marks scored, date and the description about the examination.
- **Organization:** Are you a part of any non-profit organization or ever been? Add the organization name, your position, date of tenure and description about the organization.

## Interests

Interests fall under the additional information section of your LinkedIn profile and include all the influencers and companies you follow and LinkedIn groups you have joined.

The Interests section allows you to connect with your visitors on a deeper and more personal level. It shows that you have a life outside of the corporate world too, which could make people feel more comfortable connecting with you.

The influencers, companies and the groups you choose should be related to your field of interest as it will create a better environment for the target audience to establish a connection with you.

Unlike other social media platforms, LinkedIn is career-oriented. Your profile needs to be professional so that it grabs the attention of potential employers, recruiters and contacts.

## You're ready!

To create your LinkedIn profile with the help of the above best practices, [please click here](#). Once you have created and updated different sections of your profile, you can begin sharing your public profile with your wider network. Your public profile is a simplified version of your complete LinkedIn profile that shows up in search engines and is visible to everyone.

This guide was adapted from:

**12 Tips to improve your work experience section on LinkedIn**

**20 steps to a better LinkedIn profile in 2020**

**How Do I Create a Good LinkedIn Profile?**

**For assistance to create a LinkedIn profile, book an appointment  
with Career Development:**

Book an appointment online at **Hired** (<http://hired.durhamcollege.ca>)

Virtual appointments available via MS Teams

**Oshawa campus:** Student Services building, SSB 212

**Whitby campus:** Room 103B (Beside Enrolment Services)



Hired Portal

[hired.durhamcollege.ca](http://hired.durhamcollege.ca)

- Search full-time, part-time, contract, summer, & volunteer job postings
- Book one-to-one coaching appointments
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