

LinkedIn Profile Checklist

Profile Picture

Make sure your mentee has a high quality profile headshot. There's no better way to seem approachable and human, and give people an immediate sense of who you are. Plus, LinkedIn data shows that having one makes you 7 times more likely to have your profile viewed.

Here are some pointers for picking the right photo:

- To look friendly and approachable, be sure to smile!
- Take advantage of the space available by uploading a profile picture that's at least 200px by 200px. Even better, use one that's much larger. We'll help you crop and scale your image to look its best.
- Avoid busy backgrounds or including others in your photo, unless it relates to your line of work. A neutral, solid-colored background makes the best impression, as it keeps the focus on you.
- Avoid busy backgrounds or including others in your photo, unless it relates to your line of work. In most cases, the photo should be focused solely on you.

Headline

Advise your friend or mentee to use a headline that describes the job he / she wants and his / her key skills. The best approach is to imagine what a recruiter might type into the search box and use some of those words.

If you're unsure what keywords to use, look at relevant job descriptions and which words and phrases pop up frequently.

Examples:

- Environmental Policy Analyst and SQL Expert Seeking opportunities at Nonprofits
- Director of Public Relations and Marketing | Expert at raising brand awareness and developing partnerships
- VP of Sales | Experience growing and leading global teams of 100+
- Social Media Expert driving successful B2B and B2C campaigns on a shoestring budget. Average ROI of 500

- Six Sigma Master Black Belt dedicated to process excellence in email operations
- Procurement & Contract Specialist | Treasury Manager | Trilingual in Spanish, French, and German

Summary

A good summary consists of a few brief paragraphs summarizing your professional background, key areas of expertise, and any accomplishments you're particularly proud of.

Check to see if your mentee's profile gives you a good sense of who they are and what they can do for a potential employer.

To maximize readability, consider suggesting that he/she use a bulleted list to break up the text. (You can create a bullet by pressing and holding the Alt or Option key and typing the numbers 0, 1, 4, and 9. Or just use hyphens instead.)

Last but not least, the summary is a good place to account for gaps in their work history and prove how you've kept your skills fresh. If your mentee did any kind of freelance work, took a professional class, worked on a family business, or volunteered skills at a nonprofit, this could potentially be listed as work experience.

Experience

In the experience section, we recommend listing at least three recent jobs, with detailed descriptions of your duties and accomplishments at each one.

Help your mentee by checking for the following:

- If they are switching careers, is it clear how their skills are transferrable?
- Are any acronyms or jargon explained or spelled out?
- Are all their accomplishments quantified in a way that would draw readers in?
- Is it clear what each employer does? If not, it may be worth adding a 1 sentence description for each company/organization.

Skills, Endorsements, and Recommendations

It's always a good idea to have a mix of endorsements and recommendations to show and not just tell employers what you can do.

- Check to make sure your mentee has at least 5 transferrable skills listed, with endorsements for each one.
- It can sometimes help to reorder endorsements to reflect one's professional aspirations. The skills your mentee wants to be known for most should come first.
- Check to see if your mentee has at least 1 written recommendation for each position listed on his/her profile.
- While recommendations from direct reports or peers are nice, recommendations from managers are most impactful.

Education

Check to see if your mentee has listed all his/her schools and colleges. Many jobs have a required educational level. Plus, you never know when a hiring manager might be a fellow alum!

Additionally, some LinkedIn members choose to list specific courses they've taken. If your mentee has chosen to do that, encourage him/her to focus on the courses that most directly relate to the job he/she wants rather than including the full list.

Miscellaneous

Here are a few more tips to help take your mentee's profile from good to great:

- Make sure it's immediately clear what your mentee is looking for. Sometimes focusing on too many diverse types of jobs can make it hard to optimize one's profile for any one thing.
- Unless the industry is particularly formal, LinkedIn profiles are best written in the first person. It may make your mentee seem more approachable to people viewing his/her profile.
- Encourage your mentee to use their summary and headline to clarify what sets them apart from other candidates by emphasizing the 2-3 key business results you can achieve.
- Check for spelling and grammar mistakes. A pristine profile makes a stronger first impression.
- Encourage your mentee to use the new Professional Portfolio feature to add anything from presentations to videos to images of key projects and accomplishments. People are visual, so help them visualize the value your mentee can bring to their organization.

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