



How to “LinkedIn” as a YP







A Guide to Creating, Curating, & Connecting

Social media has evolved over the past decade from Myspace, Facebook, and Twitter to now including hundreds of applications such as Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp, Reddit, dating apps, and more. Its role in the professional world is still being explored with constant new introductions such as Google Hangouts, Meetup, and Slack. While use of platforms like Twitter, TikTok and Facebook can lead to long debates over their algorithms, ethics, and the line between personal and professional, LinkedIn remains fairly uncontentious as a tool to present your “professional self” and engage with a network.

To help you prepare for the [LinkedIn Social Media Contest](#) at the [#waterYPsummit](#), check out this tip sheet on how to create and curate your online presence, including suggestions for leveraging LinkedIn to grow an online brand and build connections within the industry.

Foundations: Creating Your Profile

Best Practices




-  Customize your URL. Yes, you can do that!
-  Keep it short and concise. That goes for job titles, descriptions, your headline and about section, and your posts. Your LinkedIn profile should be a high-level summary of your professional self.
-  Pick the right profile picture. If you don’t have headshots, it’s easy to take your own. Feel free to personalize your profile with a touch of your personality, but still choose an image that best represents you and the work you do or want to do.
-  Work that headline! It’s the main thing potential connections or employers will see, so it should summarize who you are and what your ‘superpower’ skill or trait is.
-  Fill out all the sections – including schools and volunteer work. You may be surprised to find you have an alma mater in common with potential connections!
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Don’t Do These

- Don’t include information about attributes which fall under protected class status unless you are OK with potential employers seeing it.
- Avoid listing every job you have ever had in detail. It’s easy to use LinkedIn as a catchall for every experience that doesn’t fit on your one-page resume, but try to resist going into extreme detail on a role unless it is directly relevant to your career path direction.

Next level: Connections

Best Practices






-  Add a note when connecting with people – Remind them where you met or why you are reaching out.
-  Engage with your connections through likes, comments, messages, and endorsements. This tells LinkedIn’s algorithm to put your profile in more people’s news feeds. Plus, those you are engaging with are likely to return the favor!
-  The “follow” function is different than the “connect” function – Use each one as applicable to how you would like to engage with potential contacts.

Don’t Do These

- Adding famous people on LinkedIn just to have their name in your LinkedIn sphere can be tempting, and at times even useful, but perhaps not as meaningful as adding real connections that you’ve met or who have things in common with you.
- Using LinkedIn as a personal dating or friend-finding app. It creeps people out and comes across as very unprofessional.

Mastery: Content

Best practices

-  Content should be targeted to touch on topics that relate to your career, passions, or professionally relevant hobbies.
-  Posting about something you’ve learned recently (in a course, at a conference, or just in general) can even help you retain it more effectively.
-  Vary your posts – Links, long-form content, celebrating colleagues and classmates, personal achievements.
-  Share content from your connections with a comment or reaction with the “repost with thoughts” feature.
-  Guru Level: Time your posts! Many studies exist to offer guidance on the busiest times on each social media platform and LinkedIn is no exception!

Don’t Do These

- Personal life accomplishments and travel can have a place, but you should consider LinkedIn an extension of your workplace. Be sure to curate posts and content in a way that avoids sharing too much of your personal life, and that keep your image polished and professional.
 - This doesn’t mean you can’t choose to showcase your vulnerability if you feel it helps empower you, but perhaps a post about winning the alumni beer pong championship is better suited for another social media platform.
- Don’t spam your connections – Only tag your colleagues or connections on relevant posts, and only if you have a strong enough relationship or online engagement to justify it.