

Best Practices are not Practiced Brief: LinkedIn

5 More must-do basics to optimize your LinkedIn Profile

Don't underestimate the importance of LinkedIn to your online reputation. In our [LinkedIn Common Sense is not Common Brief](#), we covered a few items to get you started. As you continue on your journey to ensure that your personal brand is properly communicated online, here are a few follow up tips to convey and reiterate your value proposition.

#6 Use Keyword

Once you've identified your personal brand, make sure your LinkedIn profile is optimized with keywords that will help reinforce your value proposition. Just as your resume should be optimized for keywords so should your LinkedIn profile. These keywords will help ensure that you show up in searches that align with your key skills and competencies.

Bonus tip – While reviewing job reqs you're interested in to discover new keywords that hiring managers and recruiters may be looking for is important, you do not want to simply overload your profile with keywords that fit any position. Take time to identify your personal brand and value proposition first so you can be strategic with your keywords. Don't waste your time (and the recruiter's) trying to be everything for everyone. Remember, keywords are a great instrument to help weed out hiring managers and/or opportunities that might not be the right fit and will cause you frustration in the long run.

#7 Endorsements and recommendations

Contrary to what some professionals may believe, endorsements and recommendations are not about how popular you may be and how many friends you can get to sing your praises. These are both valuable tools to help magnify and validate your personal brand and value proposition.

Make sure you carefully align the skills you are being endorsed for with your major skills and competencies using your strategic keywords. Also, actively encourage your contacts to endorse and recommend you using your strategic keywords and make sure to return the favor (only for skills that you believe they possess) and thank folks for endorsing you.

Hot tip – sample endorsement request

Hi <Contact's first name>,
I just endorsed you for some of your awesome talents and would greatly appreciate you returning the favor. Would you mind taking a moment to visit my profile on LinkedIn and clicking on the + sign by my top skills (specifically: keyword 1, keyword 2, and keyword 3).
Hope this note finds you well and thank you for your validation!
<Your first name>

Bonus tip – When it comes to recommendations, make sure you have two focused recommendations (one from a supervisor and one from an internal or external "customer") for each role. See [5 Must-dos to make recommendations work for you](#) for more information.

#8 Add Media

In today's day and age, dynamic content is a great way to capture attention. If you are fortunate enough to have participated in a video or webcast and/or delivered an informative presentation that emphasizes your skill (and doesn't contain confidential information), make sure to add them to your profile. This type of content helps build up your online reputation and reinforce your personal brand.

#9 Network the Right Way

Whether you agree or not, we are living in an era where it is absolutely useless to apply for a job online. More and more professionals are getting noticed and discover new opportunities because of their networks so make sure you are actively building your network and connecting with people you work with and meet on a regular basis. You never know where a new opportunity may come from.

Make sure to customize your invitations to connect. You get up to 300 characters...use them! See [Top 10 Networking Best Practices](#) and [5 Must-dos when networking during a job search](#) for more information.

Hot tip - sample requests to connect

Short and sweet (if they definitely know you):

Hi <Contact's first name>,

It's been a while so I wanted to reach out to catch up. I'd love to add you to my LinkedIn network so we can touch base more regularly.

Hope all is going great on your end and looking forward to connecting!

<Your first name>

Longer and practical (if they would need a reminder):

Hi <Contact's first name>,

It was great to <meet you at XYZ conference / work with you on XYZ project / >. I'd love to add you to my LinkedIn network so we can <catch up / remain in touch>.

Hope all is going great on your end and looking forward to connecting!

<Your first name>

Bonus tip - Why am I being asked to enter an email address?

Sometimes when you attempt to send a LinkedIn request to someone, the system requests that you enter that contact's email address (even if it may be someone you know). This may be because the member you are sending the invitation to has activated his or her 'Invitation Settings' privacy feature. This setting requires that invitations only come from people who know the user's email address or appear in the user's "Imported Contacts" list. This helps to prevent users from receiving unwanted invitations.

You may also be required to enter an email address because some past recipients of your invitations have indicated they did not know you. This is just another reason why it's important to add a personal note to all invitations reminding the contact how you may know them and why you would like to connect.

#10 Nurture your Contacts...The New KIT

You're probably well aware of the acronym KIT (keep in touch) but how well do you actually follow through on it? While you may find the LinkedIn Updates emails annoying, they are actually another great tool -- one that will help simplify KITing and maintaining an authentic way to nurture your contacts. These are timely reminders to celebrate your contacts' professional achievements or moves and even birthdays.

Bonus tip - If you're more of a KIT once a week/month type of person, you can visit the "Keep in Touch" section (under the Connections tab on the top menu) -- which consolidates all your contacts' latest updates (work anniversaries and new jobs) -- for a one-stop (contact nurturing) shop. Although a more timely response to contact news is recommended.

Hope you found these tips useful and will actually put these best practices into practice. For a review of the basics, check out [5 Must-do best practices to develop your LinkedIn Profile](#).

Happy personal branding! 😊

