

## LinkedIn Profile: What it is, and Why You Need it.

LinkedIn is fast becoming the tool of choice for companies looking to head hunt talent, assess competition in their respective markets, and promote their business as an employer of choice both to active job seekers and future potential staff.

Once marketed purely as a professional networking site for individuals, LinkedIn is being increasingly used as a powerful marketing tool, an advertising mechanism both for individuals hoping to demonstrate their skills and credentials, and companies looking for these very same individuals. In addition, LinkedIn is used to connect industry professionals and open opportunities to network, collaborate and contribute.

Whether you like it or not, if you have a current LinkedIn profile you are being assessed, you are marketing your skills and experience, and making an impression in your local market.

So – let's be honest – if I browsed your LinkedIn profile right now, would you be happy with the impression I walked away with?

Here's a quick fire guide to making sure your LinkedIn profile not only represents you in the best light, but sees you well placed to attract career opportunities, professional/industry invitations and the endorsements you deserve.

- Keep it current. Think of your LinkedIn profile as your online CV. Make yourself the person I 'need to know'.
- Don't be afraid to highlight your achievements. While you may take your professional achievements for granted, if you don't recognise them, how will I know about them?
- Seek recommendations – Nothing adds credibility to your achievements than a personal recommendation from a respected industry professional
- Connect connect connect. It's not always what you know but who you know right? The larger the network, the larger your opportunities within LinkedIn. Connect!
- Contribute. LinkedIn offers huge scope for collaboration, contribution and connection with like minded professionals. And just like your connections, it's who you know that counts – meeting people just like you has never been easier on LinkedIn.
- Be prepared to be contacted. Whether you like it or not, if you choose to exist on LinkedIn this is going to happen. It may be by a recruiter, it may just be by your future employer, but if you've got a great LinkedIn profile – expect to be noticed!

The days of the paper 'CV' are over, as are the days of promoting your business operation in the local newspaper. LinkedIn is more and more being tapped into as a resource to evaluate talent, compare companies and individuals, and most critically, to evaluate 'worth' in terms of future opportunities.

Don't miss the boat – ensure your LinkedIn profile is as sharp as the best CV you would present for your dream job!