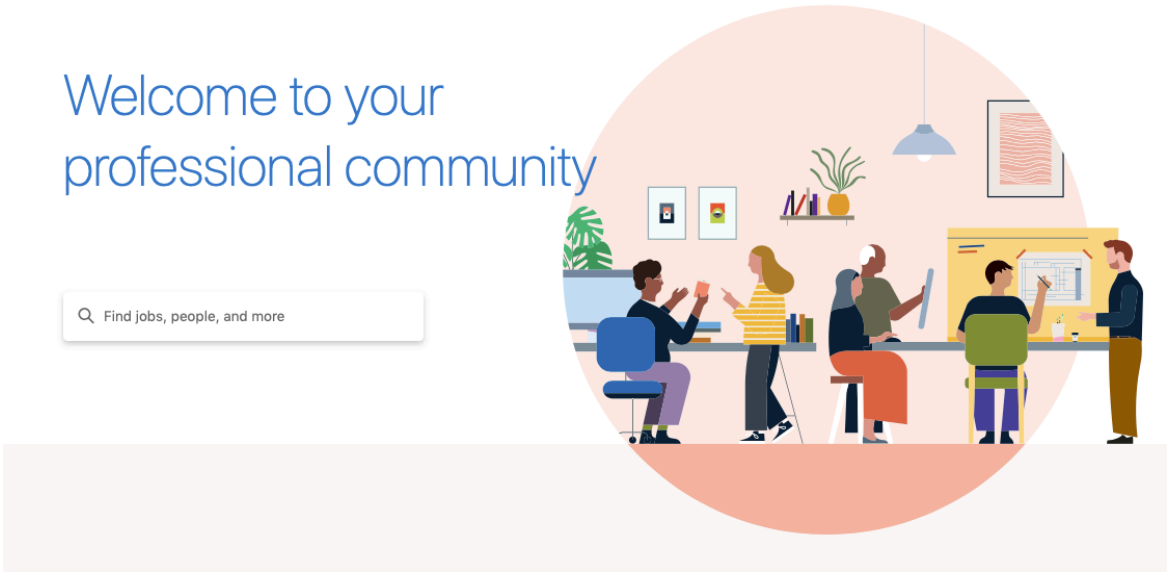
The Career Guide to LinkedIn for Students & Graduates



Build Your Profile

Find & Connect with PEOPLE, JOBS, COMPANIES, CONTENT, & COMMUNITY to grow your CAREER or BUSINESS

Copyright Jo Saunders, Wildfire Social Marketing jo@wildfiresm.com 0422 431 039 linkedin.com/in/josaunders

Whether you are in the job market now, or it is still a few years away, it is important to start building your personal career brand now. From establishing a LinkedIn profile, building a network and footprint through engaging with the right people and content, start before you are ready. A network takes time to build – start now before you need it.

Build Your LinkedIn Presence

To get your LinkedIn Profile career ready, review what you have already set up. Build your profile before you need it, and evolve it over time. If you don't yet have a Profile, set yours up now with the basic info. First impressions are important, so use this guide and the LinkedIn Profile Blueprint to get your message, story and brand right.

During the process conduct your research so that you have some idea about the language to use, who the decision makers are and what the company does. Start by researching;

1. The **jobs** you would like to apply for. Use LinkedIn, Seek, Indeed etc. Look at the wording used, what the requirements are, and who the decision maker is.
2. Research the **companies** you would like to work for.
3. Research the **people** in the roles you aspire to be in and the leaders in the field.
4. Look further into the **hiring managers** and decision makers for the jobs being advertised. If they are shown, click to review their LinkedIn profile which leaves a digital footprint behind.

First let's work on your LinkedIn presence. The way you position yourself will vary, depending on what you want to achieve. Do you want to be seen as a job candidate, are you building your networks and want to be seen as an emerging leader, are you a graduate in a niche field and want to be known as subject matter expert (author, speaker, consultant)?

WHY are you using LinkedIn?

Where are you in your career journey, and where does LinkedIn fit into your plans? Start with articulating WHY you plan to start using LinkedIn and what outcomes you want to achieve. Do you want to build your personal brand, attract opportunities, be seen as a leader, secure a new contract, job, internship or are you building a business?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WHAT problems do you aspire to solve for your ideal employer or client?

Think in the seat of your ideal profile viewer, that ideal client, employer, committee volunteer coordinator, or recruiter and think about WHAT words they would use to find you. What skills, talents and experience do you have that solves a problem?

Copyright Jo Saunders, Wildfire Social Marketing jo@wildfiresm.com 0422 431 039 linkedin.com/in/josaunders

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WHAT roles are you seeking?

Create a list of possible job titles or services you wish to offer if you are looking to consult or run your own business.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WHY do you want to solve these problems or work in a specific industry?

What is your purpose or passion behind your current career choice? Watch the Simon Sinek video 'Start with Why' to get some inspiration.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now let's start reviewing or building your LinkedIn Profile.

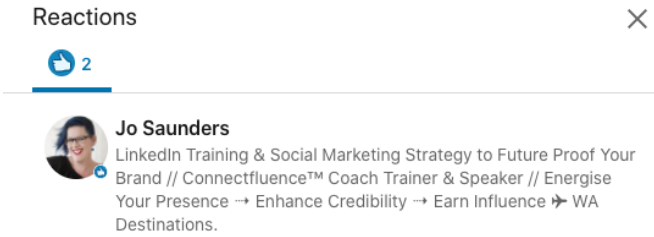
If you are just getting started, set up your basic profile. Watch this quick video:
https://youtu.be/Bvb1n_NTlSI

Copyright Jo Saunders, Wildfire Social Marketing jo@wildfiresm.com 0422 431 039 linkedin.com/in/josaunders

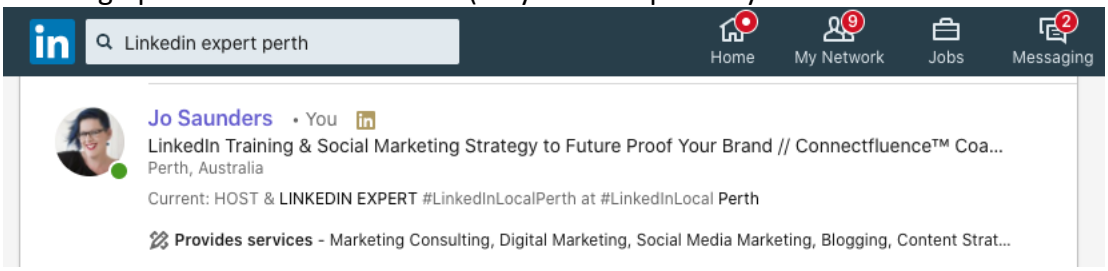
YOUR LINKEDIN FIRST IMPRESSION

Your LinkedIn profile is more than an online resume, it is a place to build your personal brand and career network. It will be a work in progress but ensure you have put your best digital foot forward. Use this guide to update yours.

Before a viewer clicks on your Profile, they will see your name, photo and headline. If someone discovers you in search results, see's your comment or reaction on a post, or you come up as a suggested connection or they hover over your name, they see your photo and headline. For example, when I like or react to a post, this is what anyone can see;

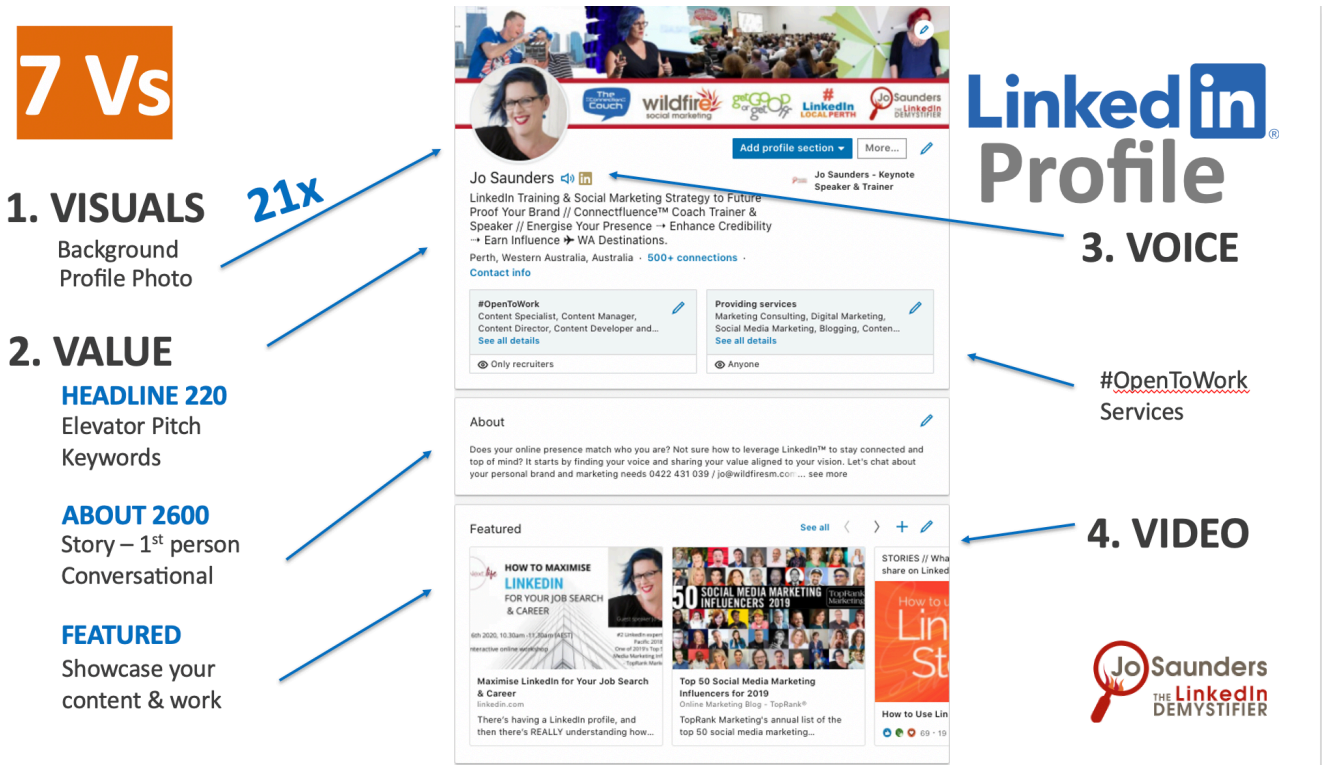


Showing up in search looks like this (only the first part of your Headline will be seen in some locations.):



Now you can understand how important these three things are.

Once someone clicks on your name, they open up your profile. Let's look at all the sections;



5. VALIDATION

EXPERIENCE 5
Connect to the Page

EDUCATION 3

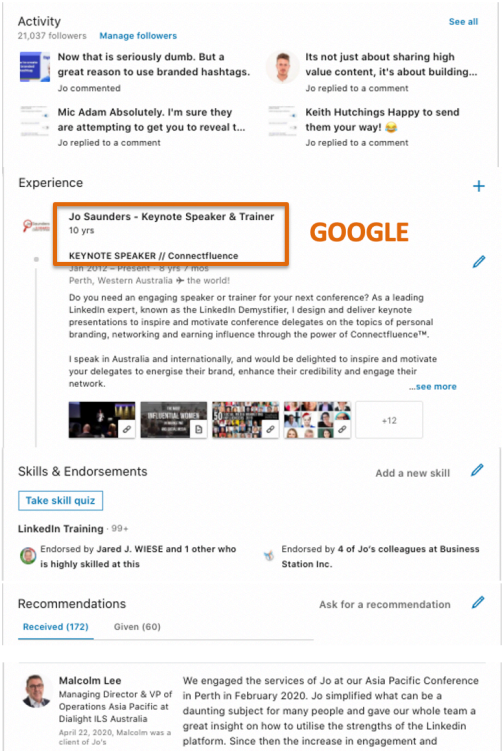
CERTIFICATIONS 3

VOLUNTEERING 3

SKILLS 3 / 50

RECOMMENDATIONS 2

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



6. VULNERABILITY & 7. VISIBILITY

ACTIVITY

Curate, Create and Converse

Personalise
Add value
E3 + IC2

Jo Saunders THE LinkedIn DEMYSTIFIER

Start with your Headline

Think about your headline as a positioning statement. It is one the most important parts of your pofile, for findability, visibility, and positioning. The purpose is to get you found in searches, within LinkedIn and in Google, and get you clicked on. When building your profile, LinkedIn will try to help by suggesting you add your title and company of your current position of the part time job you have. This is not the best way to use this space.

Here are three frameworks for writing for Headline;

1. **Current [expertise] student – Future [skill / problem solver / title + industry]**
2. **[Expertise/ area of study] graduate – Ready to take on [insert role / industry]**
3. **Future [Expertise] – seeking opportunities to gain experience in [keyword]**

Craft a headline to use on your profile. Does it communicate your value, aspirations and inspire action?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PROFILE CHECKLIST

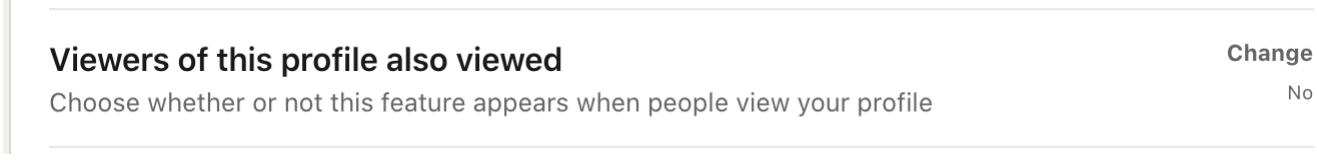
Follow this list to be set up correctly. If you need help writing about yourself, refer to my blueprint.

- ☐ **Name** – Your everyday name (not nick name or the full name only your parents use!)
- ☐ **Headline** – What problem do you plan to solve, what role are you looking for, what industry are you looking to work in, what do you do now (student, graduate, job seeker?). Add context and keywords to help with findability. Use job adds to find the right words to match where you are going and what you can do. Not having a headline, or having one that is vague will not inspire the viewer to click on you.
- ☐ **Profile Photo** – Head and shoulders, current and friendly – dress for your interview/meeting Use a photo of yourself dressed as you would turn up to an interview or client meeting. A smart phone photo is fine, just avoid an obvious selfie and distracting background, unless related to your career. The best option is to have a photo taken by a photographer. Not having a photo is like going to an event or job interview with a bag on your head. So be sure to use a professional themed photo to create the right first impression.
- ☐ **Background image** – Share a representation of your personal brand, industry and skills. Use a single image, positioned, or get creative and create a custom graphic using your favourite design tool. Canva is a the easiest place to start.
- ☐ **Name Audio Recording** – Useful for unusual or difficult to pronounce names (on mobile app)
- ☐ **Contact Info**
  - Customise your profile URL from default member ID in Public Profile settings
  - Link to up to 3 URLs – e.g. portfolio, personal brand website, relevant YouTube channel
  - Email – Add a professional email address ego name@name.com or name@gmail.com
  - Phone – Add mobile
- ☐ **About** – Share you story summary using the 7 step framework (refer to Profile Blueprint).
- ☐ **Featured** – PDF resume (without personal info), link to portfolio, slide decks, posts & articles
- ☐ **Experience** – Add relevant work experience and jobs to share transferrable skills
- ☐ **Education** – Add your school, TAFE or Uni courses including your area of expertise & connect to the educational institution page (so that you show up as Alumni)
- ☐ **Certifications** – any licenses and certifications relevant to your work eg Adobe certification
- ☐ **Volunteering** – Add community groups, committees and volunteer work (volunteering is a great way to gain some experience and make connections)
- ☐ **Skills** – Add the software and skills developed in your studies, relevant to the role
- ☐ **Accomplishments** –
  - Courses – add relevant units from your qualification, or extra study
  - Awards – Add achievements related to your study or career e.g. Employee of the Month
  - Organisations – Add any professional memberships
  - Languages – spoken, written or understood
  - Test Scores – showcase where you did well
  - Projects – link to projects and add team members
  - Publications – link to video, articles, interviews

Settings

Turn off People Also Viewed to remove distractions.

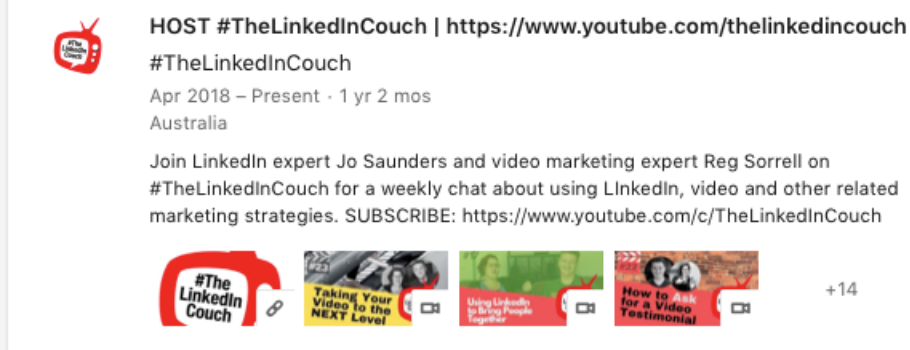
Me > Settings & Privacy > Privacy > **How others see your profile and network information**



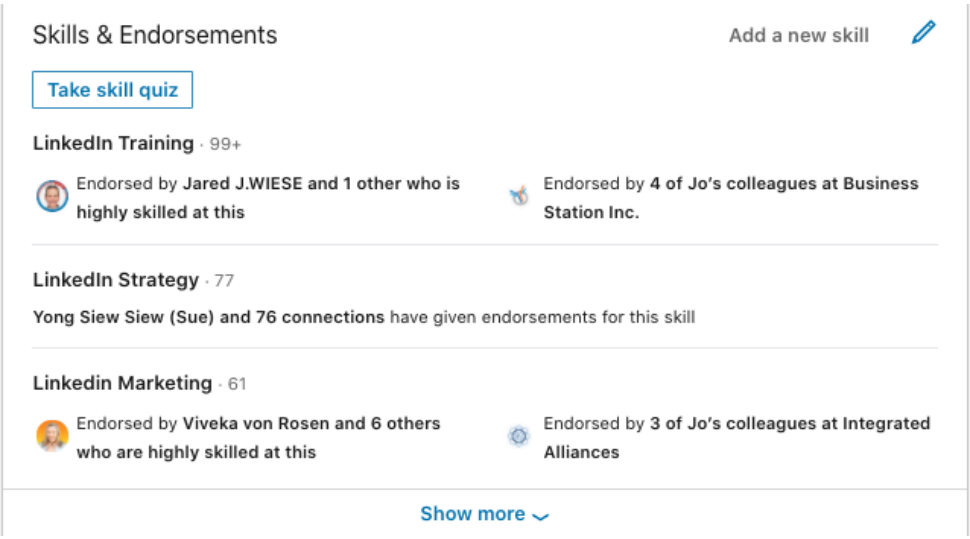
SHOWCASE YOUR WORK

1. Are you looking for Freelance / Contract work? Add a role for this under your own brand. Describe the sort of projects you work on, and add media to showcase any work already done.

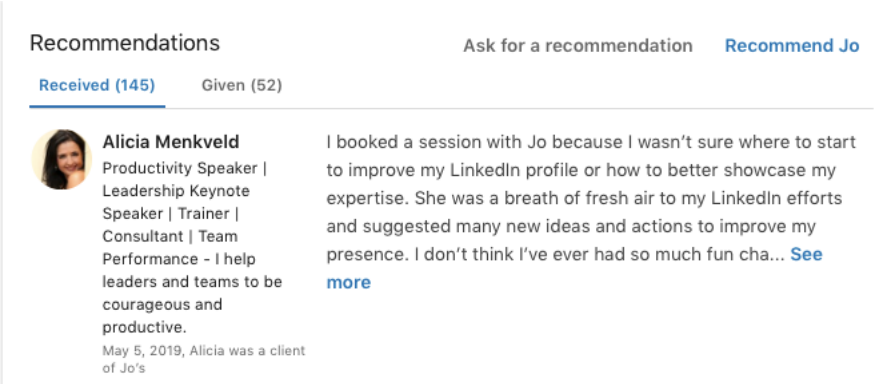
2. Do you have a YouTube Channel? You could add a role to showcase your work.



3. Pin your 3 most important skills to the top of the Skills & Endorsement section. Look at the key words and phrases in job adverts that relate to the skills that you have or are developing. If you have programming or high-level software skills, take a skill quiz to demonstrate your knowledge.



4. Ask for Recommendations. Who in your career could write you a recommendation for your skills, achievement, attitude and personality? Think about teachers, lecturers, people you work or volunteer with, mentors, and ask them. You must be connected to them first.



LINKEDIN ACTIVITY PLAN

LinkedIn is the largest PROFESSIONAL social network, and after setting up a well branded profile, the next step is to build and engage with your network.

Firstly, consider your goals. Are you looking for a job, clients for your business or are you wanting to build a network in a particular industry or location?

Get clear on your VALUES, VISION and VOICE, so every engagement is related to your bigger purpose. Never be negative, salesy, or self-promotional when engaging. Be social and conversational, and demonstrate your expertise and brand through how you engage.

Map out an action plan and set up reminders. Some tasks can be bi-weekly, others monthly.

- Connect to
  - Students in your course
  - Course lecturers
  - People in your industry

- Follow
  - Companies you want to work for
  - Industry influencers and leaders
  - Decision makers
  - Hashtags used in your industry

- Engage
  - Research people, companies and content to find opportunities to engage
  - Like or comment on updates from people/companies you aspire to work with
  - Comment on updates from people you want to be known by or associated with
  - Share other people's updates with your own positive thoughts
  - @mention people and use relevant hashtags

- Publish
  - Create your own posts using text, images, video and documents.
  - End each post with a 3-5 relevant hashtags to index your content
  - @mention people or companies where relevant to give credit and invite conversation
  - Publish an article – your resume with links to work and embedded video/images
  - Take photos at events and share with the speaker – they may appreciate it
  - Share a post about your guest lecturers and @mention them with a photo
  - Create short video, memes and GIFs to capture attention
  - Turn your content into a document (carousel style) post

- Groups
  - Join industry groups
  - Find people to follow and engage with
  - Engage with content in groups

- Social Proof
  - Ask for colleagues, lecturers and employers to endorse your skills
  - Ask for recommendations from teachers/lecturers or people you have worked for/with

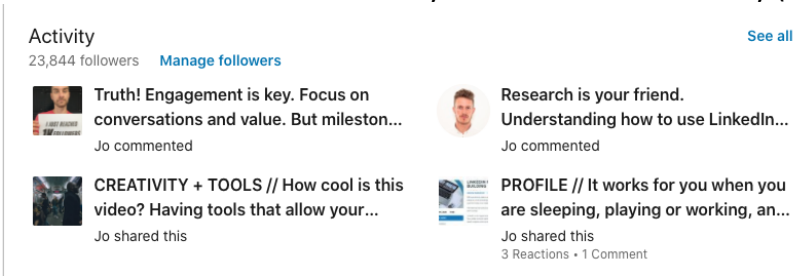
Copyright Jo Saunders, Wildfire Social Marketing jo@wildfiresm.com 0422 431 039 linkedin.com/in/josaunders

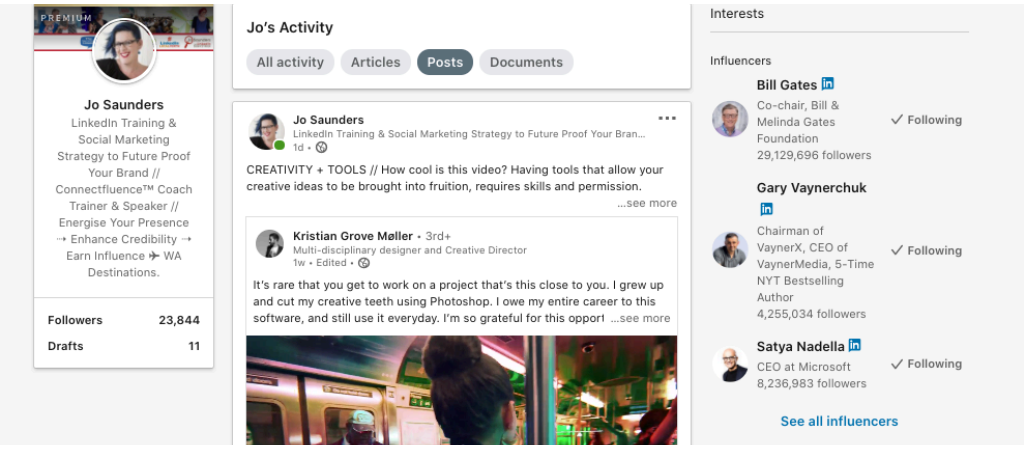
CONTENT IDEAS

Use content as a way to showcase your talents and stand out. Content can be created, curated (shared with your thoughts) and content is even comments on other people's content.

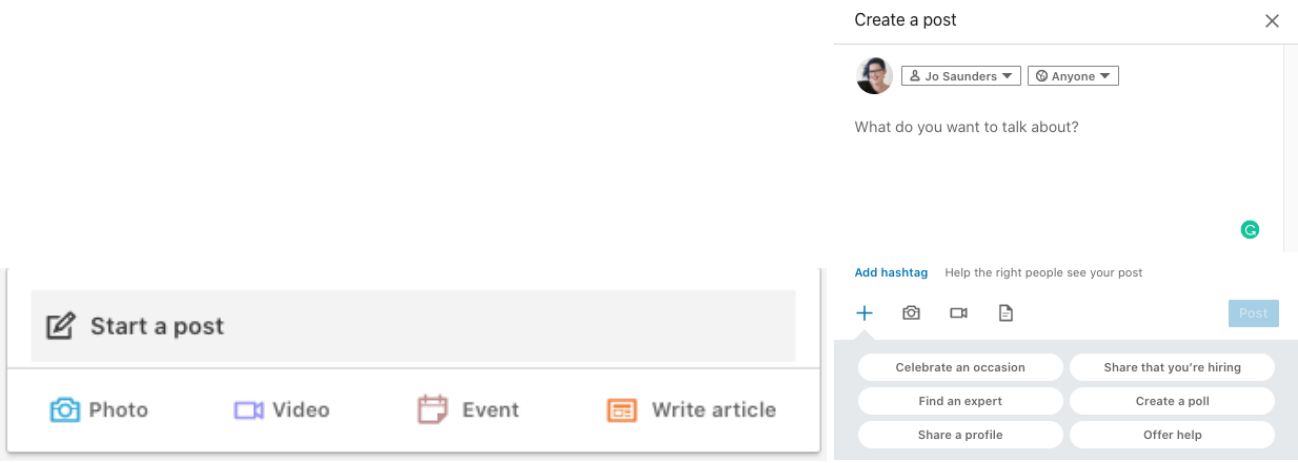
Each piece of content must have a purpose which is communicated in the message. Content can be used to tell a story, showcase your passion, raise awareness, start conversation or invite action. If you have work created as a group, you could share this while @mentioning all involved, with permission.

Content shared can be found on your Profile under Activity (click See All to access the different types);





If you are creating video content to upload directly, it must be less than 10 minutes long - the shorter the better. Add captions if the message is important by creating an SRT file (using Kapwing, Otter, Rev or download and edit the transcript file from YouTube). To share multiple images or a create a 'flip book' create content in PPT or Canva, exported as a PDF document which can be uploaded with your post using the document feature. Share short updates, or create a post up to 1300 characters, or publish an article with various media embedded, which could be a visual version of your resume.



Mind map the topics you could share posts or articles about. You will be surprised just how much you can contribute easily, in text, images and video.

If you are not sure where to start and what you could create and share, here are some ideas.

- **What is your school / college doing?** Share a post about a project or initiative that links to your future career, and @Mention people involved, such as guest lectures and excursions.
- **What are you reading?** Share your current book or a photo of the books you have read over the last month/quarter and ask your network for other book suggestions.
- **What are you listening to?** Introduce a podcast and why you enjoy it. Ask for suggestions.
- **What are you watching / learning?** Share something you discovered in your industry or the industry you want to work in that will help them and show that you are developing your skills.
- **What innovations are happening in your industry/area?** Share news or photos you have taken.
- **Share progress** – Take a photo of your current project or share how you overcame a challenge.
- **Where are you travelling?** Share a graphic or photo of where you are travelling to and ask what you must see or who you need to meet (at a time when travel is available).
- **Who are looking forward to seeing?** Name the speakers at a conference and why you are excited about hearing them speak or meeting them.
- **Where have you been?** Share a photo or collection of photos (in a document post) with a story that relates to what you do, why you were there or something about your values.
- **Who did you meet?** Share a photo with a person you met and something positive about them.
- **Share news** – Become known for something specific by sharing breaking news about your topic.
- **Seek opinion** – Share a few things in a photo and ask your network for preference.
- **Quote influential people** – Relate it to your industry and ask a question.
- **Go behind the scenes** – Use video to share where you are or why you are looking forward to an event, conference or project.
- **Introduce** – Introduce someone to your network via video, end with a question.
- **Reflect** – What did you learn, what were your top 3-5 takeaways from an event / experience
- **Collaborate** – Share achievements of peers in your industry, e.g. awards wins or new jobs
- **Join** – Be part of a bigger conversation by sharing content related to topics or engage with existing content eg #FilmIndustry #NMTAFE #WhenIWas15 #LinkedInLocalPerth
- **Engage** - @mention relevant people / companies. Use relevant hashtags. Include a question.

Bonus tip - If you want to include a URL – but the preview doesn't show an image, start with your own image then add the link to the description text.

Start Liking, then progress to commenting and sharing your own posts and articles. Why? To increase your visibility, by showing up in the newsfeed of your connections, and potentially their network.

Need help? Subscribe to my YouTube Channel: youtube.com/josaunders

Copyright Jo Saunders, Wildfire Social Marketing jo@wildfiresm.com 0422 431 039 linkedin.com/in/josaunders