

## **5 Essentials for LinkedIn Success**

LinkedIn is probably best described as your résumé on steroids. It's where you need to be as a professional to establish social relevance in the business world. It isn't the only social media tool that's useful for business, but it's certainly one of the most widely accepted.

So, how do you make the most of your LinkedIn profile? Here are 5 quick tips that I find to be essential for making the most of LinkedIn for business.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Essential – Complete Your Profile**

This is often overlooked but it's very important. LinkedIn even walks you through the process and gives you a percentage rating based on how much you've completed.

Your picture is very important. People want to feel that they are dealing with a real person – a face with a name. I recommend using something more professional for LinkedIn and keep the fun and goofy shots for Facebook.

You want to include a complete and relevant work history as well as your work experience and achievements. This boosts your profile and creates a more search engine friendly profile filled with industry specific keywords.

And be sure to include your contact information. You probably don't want to include your email or you might get spammed like crazy, but at least have a link to your website and maybe a phone number.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Essential – Give Recommendations**

Notice I said give and not get? There are tools in LinkedIn that allow you to solicit recommendations from your contacts. And while some feel this is perfectly acceptable, I disagree.

You will get more if you give more. Focus on giving glowing recommendations to your contacts. When you submit these the person you recommended will be notified.

They'll be very flattered. LinkedIn automatically suggests that they return the favor. And more often than not, they will with glowing recommendations of their own. You might not get as many, but the quality of the ones you get will be much higher.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Essential – Get Connected**

There are a few different ways to do this. First, you will want to import your contacts. If you use Outlook you will need to download your contacts list as a CSV file and upload that to LinkedIn. If you use something like Gmail, Yahoo, MSN, etc., you can directly import these contacts into LinkedIn to send out invites. Either way, these are people you're already connected to. You might as well extend that connection to LinkedIn.

Another way to build your connections is to simply invite people to connect as you get access to their email addresses. Be careful with this. Make sure you know them and have emailed them previously.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Essential – Be a Resource Rather Than a Nuisance**

There are lots of ways to build on your connections and reach in LinkedIn. One way to do this is to add value to your profile. This could come in the form of adding a feed from your Blog, including your Twitter feed or start a user group or forum.

You can also setup a page for your company and do the same things on that page. This is all great and can be very useful if done properly. The questions you need to ask are “Do I bring value?” and “What is the value to pitch ratio of the information I post?”

Similar to your recommendations, you will get more if you give more. If you promote your wares incessantly, you will very quickly get tuned out.

If you promote useful information, you will be perceived as a trusted resource and more attention will be paid to what you do.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Essential – Use It**

Seems obvious right? It’s amazing how many will dismiss LinkedIn as a useless waste of time when they rarely, if ever, log in and actively use it.

Engage in conversation, read people’s posts, give recommendations, and use the tool. If you are active, you will get noticed and you will see benefits. Remember, the squeaky wheel gets greased.

This will spill over into other areas of your business. If you are actively engaged on LinkedIn you will become the person that they “remember from your LinkedIn posts.” This creates trust beyond the Cyberworld which spills over into what I like to call the “tangible reality.”

Written by:

Jon-Mikel Bailey

Wood Street

[www.woodstreet.com](http://www.woodstreet.com)

Wood Street, Inc. is an award winning web and mobile design and development firm that provides online marketing and communications solutions.

