

WNYEC Best Practice / Differentiator

Linked-In (area)	Profile development (subject)
Mac Z, Kellee R, Mike C (team)	29 Mar 2010 (revision date)

Best Practice Topic	Best Practice Description
1.) Don't cut and paste your resume	Linkedin hooks you into a network, not just a human resources department. You wouldn't hand out your resume before introducing yourself, so don't do it here. Instead, describe your experience and abilities as you would to someone you just met. Also, write for the screen, in short blocks of copy with visual or textual signposts.
2.) Borrow from the best marketers	Light up your Profile with your voice. Use specific adjectives, colorful verbs, active construction ('managed project team', not 'responsible for project team management'). Act naturally; don't write in the third person unless that formality suits your brand. Picture yourself at a conference or client meeting. How do you introduce yourself? That's your authentic voice, so use it.
3.) Write a personal tagline	That line of text under your name is the first thing people see in your Profile. It follows your name in search hit lists. It's your brand. (Note: your e-mail address is not a brand!). Your company's brand might be so strong that it and your title are sufficient. However, you might need to refine your professional personality into a more eye-catching phrase that describes who you are at a glance.
4.) Put your elevator speech to work	Go back to your conference introduction. That 30-second description, the essence of who you are and what you do, is a personal elevator speech. Use it in the Summary section to engage readers. You've got 5 - 10 seconds to capture their attention. The more meaningful your summary is, the more time you'll get from readers.
5.) Point out your skills	Think of the Specialties field as your personal search engine optimizer. It is an avenue to refine the ways people find and remember you. This searchable section is where that list of industry buzzwords from your resume belongs. This is also the place to display particular abilities and interests, the personal values you bring to your professional performance, or even a note of humor or passion.
6.) Explain your experience	Help the reader grasp the key points. Briefly say what the company does and what you did or do for them. Picture yourself at that conference again. After you've introduced yourself, how do you describe what you do, what your company does? Use those clear, succinct phrases here and break them into visually digestible chunks.
7.) Distinguish yourself from the crowd	Use the 'Additional Information' section to round out your Profile with a few key interests. Add websites that showcase your abilities or passions. Then edit the default 'My Website' label to encourage click-throughs (you get Google page rankings for those, raising your visibility). Maybe you belong to a trade association or an interest group; help other members find you by naming those groups. If you're an award winner recognized by peers, customers or employers, add prestige without bragging by listing them here.
8.) Ask and answer questions	Thoughtful questions and useful answers build your credibility. The best ones give people a reason to look at your Profile. Make a point of answering questions in your field to establish your expertise, raise your visibility, and most important, to build social capital with people in your network. You may need answers to a question of your own down the road.
9.) Improve your Google Page Rank	Pat your own back and others'. Get recommendations from colleagues, clients, and employers who can speak credibly about your abilities or performance. (Think quality, not quantity.) Ask them to focus on a specific skill or personality trait that drives their opinion of you. Make meaningful comments when you recommend others. Also, mix it up because variety makes your recommendations feel authentic.
10.) Build your connections	Connections are one of the most important aspect of your brand. The company you keep reflects the quality of your brand. What happens when you view a Profile and see that you know someone in common? That Profile's credibility increases. The value of that commonality works both ways. So identify connections that will add to your credibility and pursue those.

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Additional tips	Steps
Make your profile viewable to the public	Go to Profile at the top of the page and go into edit. Check all the boxes you want displayed to the public.
Customize your URL	Go to Profile at the top of the page and go into edit. Go to "your public profile URL" and hit edit. Change the default name at the end of URL address to the specific listing you prefer.
External Links & References	
Primary source for these 10 best	http://linkedin.custhelp.com - help topics - "Ten Tips on Building a Strong Profile"