

When it comes to being found online, especially for CPAs and business professionals, LinkedIn is the go-to social media platform of choice.



Why is that?

With over [238 million users in more than 200 countries and territories, and 1.5 million groups](#) to participate in, it just makes sense.

How do you leverage this powerful platform to your best advantage? Here are ten tips to help get you started and additional resources you can use to make your personal brand stand out on this top social media platform.

1. Begin by **completing your profile**. I don't just mean fill it out with a list of resume items. I mean complete it with purpose. Of course, use a professional photo (not the one from your wedding, please). Then think about your niche audience and clientele. What type of keywords would they be searching for to find someone like you?
2. Make your **profile standout**. For accountants or other professionals with industry accreditation, such as CITP or CFP, add them as part of your title. This helps not only with LinkedIn searchers, but also with search engine searches.
3. **Keywords** are very important. As you write your profile summary, think about the keywords people would use to find you. If you are unsure, use a tool like [Moz's Keyword Ranking tool](#), [Google's Keyword Planning tool](#), or [HubSpot's SEO tools](#). This helps you to find the terms that best fit your niche, as well as the terms most used within the profession. Avoid making assumptions here.
4. **Skills and experience** should be moved to the top of the profile, directly under the profile summary. Why? Because if I'm searching LinkedIn on a mobile device, the chance of scrolling is limited. List only those skills you want to be contacted for, or that

you want to build business in.

5. Share an **insight about yourself** that people might be able to connect with you about. For example, if you do a lot of volunteer work, add that. If you are a dog lover, add that. It's an opportunity for those connecting with you to have a conversational element they might be able to mention if they meet you in person.

Additional Tips

1. When you've discovered the **keywords** you should be using in your profile, sprinkle them throughout the:
 - Headline
 - Current work experience
 - Past work experience
 - Summary
 - Specialties
2. **Personalize LinkedIn requests** with how you might know someone or why you'd like to connect. For example, if you share a group, tell the invitee. If you are interested in learning more about their business or how they might help you, ask that as well.
3. Before accepting a **connection request**, it's okay to view the person's profile first. It's also okay not to accept an invite.
4. **Organizing contacts** into groups—also known as [tagging](#)—allows you to segment your connection list for future lead generation opportunities. For example, segmenting connections into groups like clients, prospects, and connectors—those who could introduce you to someone else—is a good place to start. Share information with them via LinkedIn messaging. Avoid spamming, or you may find your connections disconnecting.
5. **Post status updates** a few times per week and engage in group discussion. Both of these efforts not only help with your LinkedIn status, but also influence [search engine optimization \(SEO\)](#) for your personal brand. Be thoughtful about these updates, making them valuable to your connections. For example, if you're a CPA, you might want to post monthly tax deadlines that people need to be aware of, or tips on financial planning. Be careful to follow [Circular 230](#) and [FINRA 10-06](#) and [FINRA 11-39](#) Social Media guidelines in your posts.

When it comes to personal branding, you are the product. Be thoughtful about your posts. Share value-added information. Ensure your profile leverages keywords to influence your search ranking. Most of all, be considerate of the platform and avoid spamming people.

Additional Resources

- [Personal Branding Handbook](#) to help you get started with your personal branding campaign today.
- [LinkedIn Profile enhancements](#) to make the most from your personal branding effort.

Your Turn

What tips would you share with LinkedIn users about your personal branding experience?

Need Help?

Getting started on LinkedIn is not difficult. However, leveraging all that the platform has to offer can be complicated. If you need help getting started with or leveraging the power of LinkedIn, complete the form on the right panel.