

How to Build Your Professional Brand

Whether you're trying to find a [new job](#) or simply want to be more successful in your current role, you need to build a strong online presence so you're always making a great impression. Since recruiters and hiring managers often use social media sites to get background information on candidates, your online presence should be complete, up to date, and indicative of your industry leadership.

Invest time in your LinkedIn profile

You'll want an extensive explanation of your past experiences. [LinkedIn profiles](#) that list past positions are 12 times more likely to be reviewed by hiring managers and are 6 times more likely to receive new business opportunities.

In addition, make sure you've filled out all of your profile sections. Be sure to invest time in building out a strong [summary](#) that conveys who you are as a professional, highlights your areas of expertise, and entices the reader to delve deeper into your profile. Also, use standard industry keywords to describe your skills and add them to the [Skills](#) section of your profile. This will help you appear in recruiters' searches for candidates with those capabilities.

You can also add [special profile sections](#) that showcase your honors and awards, volunteer experience and causes, portfolio of projects, blog, and more. If you're not sure your profile is 100% complete, hover over the "Profile" tab on LinkedIn, click "Edit Profile," and follow the prompts at the top of the page.

Benchmark yourself against industry peers

Look up the [LinkedIn profiles](#) of people with the positions you'd like to have. You can search for profiles by keyword and then filter by company, past company, industry, geography, school and more. The goal of looking at other profiles is to identify areas of improvement for your own profile, including skills that you should highlight more prominently or [LinkedIn Groups](#) related to your industry that you should join.

Get recommendations

Get recommendations from former supervisors, peers, and direct reports. Members with recommendations are 3 times more likely to be contacted on LinkedIn. It may help to suggest skills or projects for the recommender to focus on. The more specific the recommendation, the more credible it is, so make sure you only ask for recommendations from those who know your professional abilities very well.

Try to get at least one recommendation for every job you list on your [LinkedIn profile](#). Including a recommendation draft for an individual before sending the request may increase the likelihood that the connection will recommend you.

Post Status Updates on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook

[Posting status updates](#) on social networks gives you the chance to share news and insights — not just with other connections, but with recruiters and hiring managers who may be browsing various social networks for top talent.

While it helps to let your network know that you're looking for a new job, you should also use your updates to showcase your industry expertise. For example, if you're a graphic designer, comment on a company's recent brand refresh and its significance.

You can also share information about industry events you plan to attend. Or, ask questions relating to a hot industry issue, and start a conversation by encouraging your connections to respond. Remember, posting updates drives traffic to your profile, which draws attention to your skills and experience.

Keep in mind that building your professional brand isn't just a one-time event — you need to make a long-term commitment to being a thought leader in your industry in order to open doors to more career opportunities.