



Polish your Profile Checklist: Grow your Business

Your clients are looking for you online. Be sure your profile includes these elements:

Your Name – be sure there’s nothing else on this line

Your Professional Headline: Many people put a job title for their Professional Headline. If your company has a policy about Professional Headlines, follow the policy. If not, it’s *much* better if you put a tagline, or the results you get for your clients. When your buyers look for products and services on LinkedIn, a list of many profiles comes up. If all of the Professional Headlines are the same, it doesn’t give people a reason to click on your profile when they see it in a search results list. With a tagline, it’s an automatic differentiator and sets you apart. You can put more than one thing in as your Headline and separate each one with the “pipe” character. Use the pipe character rather than bullet points or asterisks because the search engines like the pipe better. For example:

Sales Enablement | Social Selling | Revenue Acceleration

Your photo: Be sure your photo projects a professional image. Make a size where the viewer sees your eyes and expression on your face. This is important for two reasons: 1) You don’t have a second chance to make a first impression, and 2) when people search. Don’t have a vacation background or the siding of your house. For women, if you wear jewelry, be sure it’s not so large that it detracts from your face.

Dress professionally – for your decision-maker, the person who writes the check. I learned in the days when I was connected with the U.S. State Department that it’s better to be a bit over-dressed in a situation than if you’re under-dressed. One of my workshop attendees is an architect, and works in the field every day on construction sites. He asked if he should wear a suit in his photo even if he never wears one to work. I asked him who writes his checks (i.e., his decision-maker). He said it was the CFO. I told him to wear a suit in that case, because it’s the CFO he’s dressing for.

Your Contact information (how you want people to contact you): For salespeople and professionals, I recommend including your email address and phone number to make it easy to reach you.

- **Websites:** List your websites. *Insider Secret:* When you list them, choose “Other” rather than “Company Website”. That way, you can label each one with a more compelling label such as your company name, product name, or a special promotion or video.

Personalize the link to your profile: You'll find this as part of your Contact information, and it may have a jumble of numbers and letters at the end. Edit this link so that your name is at the end, and no numbers. Then put it in your email signature where your website, email address and other contact information is. That way people can easily recognize it. Then they click on your link and go directly to your profile. Presto! You're on their radar screen again. You can copy the link into your signature, make it into a hyperlink, or create a badge (see the LinkedIn Help Center for details). To download my article on how to personalize your link, go to www.JanWallen.com/socialsellingarticles)

For example, my email signature looks like this:

Jan Wallen
Online Networking Experts
www.JanWallen.com
Connect on [LinkedIn](#) (I've made mine into a hyperlink here)

The Summary section – your message, story and silent salesperson. Write several paragraphs and bullet points that show what you do for your clients and highlight your products and services. Clearly describe *what differentiates you and your company* from those who provide similar products and services. There is a length limit for your Summary section. You can usually write two to four paragraphs or a combination of paragraphs and bullet points. Remember that this is a place to showcase your expertise for your buyers. The P-A-R story is a good way to tell your story. (See the section above for more details on updating your Summary section.)

- **Specialties:** LinkedIn has changed this section recently. If you had a list of words in your Specialties section, they can stay there, though cannot be edited. They can also be incorporated into your Summary section, though it takes up part of the word count for the length limit.
- **Video:** You can now put a video or images on your profile. You can either list the link to your video in your Contact Information area of your profile or separately. (See the LinkedIn Help Center for more details)

The Experience section is for your current and past companies and positions – your credentials – with descriptions and stories. It supports what you've written in the Summary section about your expertise. People look here **after** they skim your Summary section. They want to know your credentials and how you're qualified to be the expert. It's not meant to be your life story. List companies and positions you hold currently and those you've held in the past. Make it concise. It's not meant to be your life story. Put a brief description of each company and three bullet points describing what you accomplished there. Don't include a long chronological list. Be strategic about it.

Your Education – the last 10 years

The Skills and Expertise section with your top skills. List your most important skills – the ones your potential clients are looking for. It’s part of “social proof”, which is becoming more and more popular in our social media world. People who have a platform and many followers become “influencers”. When people see that you have a lot of endorsements, they’re perception is that you’re good at what you do.

When you add your skills, LinkedIn helps with a list to choose from. You can also add your own skills. When people see your profile, they can now endorse you for skills on your list. They can also add new areas of expertise and skills. When they do that, you approve the endorsements before they are added to your list. You’ll see their photos next to the skills they endorsed you for. Take time to add the most relevant areas of your Skills & Expertise. Don’t spend a lot of time trying to be sure this section is “perfect” or completely accurate. Your time is best spent on sales and business development.

Recommendations: Be sure they’re results- and action-oriented. These are written by people you work with, have worked for, and your clients. It’s best to get 360° recommendations. Check to be sure they are thoughtful and results-oriented. (See the section below or the LinkedIn Help Center for more details).

Publications, if appropriate. Include the links.

Additional information, such as your interests, company websites and blog, video on YouTube or your website, and online resources you want people to see

The LinkedIn groups you’ve joined

The Honors and Awards, if appropriate – don’t be shy here

Video: You can now put a video or images on your profile. You can either list the link to your video in your Contact Information area of your profile or separately. (See the LinkedIn Help Center for more details)



About Jan Wallen

Jan is dedicated to keeping her clients up-to-date with social selling and social media best practices—that is, what really works. Whether you’re looking for a new position or advancing your career, social media is a critical piece of your success – *if* you know the right things to do. She leverages her Fortune 500 and Big 4 sales, CRM and social media expertise, and wrote the book on LinkedIn—literally. Jan is the author of *Mastering LinkedIn in 7 Days or Less* and the forthcoming book *Social Selling with Social Media* (available soon). You can follow Jan’s insights about social media for social selling, your successful job search and advancing your career on her blog (www.janwallen.com/sales-blog) and on [LinkedIn](#) and on [Twitter](#).