

12 LinkedIn Tips to get you started – April 2010

LinkedIn is the 'business' arm of social media with some 60 million professional members worldwide. As with all social media, your input will determine your output. Here's a few tips to get you started and if you come across new/better ways to do things, please let me know!

1. Why have you joined LinkedIn?

- a. To build a network of peers in a similar business?
- b. Career advancement or change?
- c. Finding new customers?
- d. Reputation/brand?

Remember your objective when completing and updating your profile.

2. Your Profile

a. Insert a photo – really important

- Ensure it's a 'proper' head shot/head-shoulders - not a holiday snap with the family; this is a professional networking site. If you don't have a good picture, then worth the investment - then it's ready for other sites, any PR you may be undertaking etc.
- Not the place for logos – see below for linking your Company profile (d)

b. Give it some of your time

- Give at least your key areas of expertise
- Remember this is your profile, not your company's-even if you own it
- Use the summary to mirror your elevator pitch – who do you work with and how can you help them; use strong buzzy words
- Give a brief résumé of your previous employment and education.
- When it comes to your 'current position' this may not describe fully your expertise – eg MD. You can add a second current position which better describes your role which will help people to find you
- Try to include keywords – aim to jump-start a conversation from what you write
- When you add your website, you have a choice of what you can call it on the drop down – you could use your company name again instead of just 'my' web etc.
- Don't forget to include your contact details (but if you have a home/office consider whether you should give your home address)
- Under the LinkedIn Help directory, see 'Ten Tips on Building a Strong Profile'

c. You can change the order the sections in your profile- use the 'drag' handles

d. You can create a separate profile for your company from your LinkedIn home page – then you/current and past employees can connect and you can use this to announce promotions, events, new staff etc – which will be published as normal to your LinkedIn network. Go to the 'More' tab at the top and then to 'companies' and then add new; from this you can add your company logo – two in fact.

e. Add the LinkedIn home page as your browser default (Tools > Internet Options) and copy/paste your LinkedIn home page and click OK at the bottom) or http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=browser_toolbar_download Or at the bottom of your LinkedIn home page go to Tools and download from there. If OTT perhaps as a 'favourite' on your tool bar or add it as your browser default.

f. Use your tag line to good effect –top line below

Partner at Armstrong Beech Marketing - experienced professional working with owner managers to grow their business.

g. **Network activity – see below -**

- Check yours out – it tells you when you last updated it – put a calendar reminder on your Outlook ideally weekly (or more)!
- It's short – just a few words but can be used to good effect.
- Use it to say when you're running seminars (AND don't forget to add these under Events (see More... along top tab and Events is there); link to blog etc.
- If you own a restaurant/pub you could say if there's a specific function you're working towards.
- If you're offering a service with a time line running out, then add this (check surname not repeated)
- And remember, your updates will be circulated amongst your LinkedIn contacts on the weekly update if they have their setting so to receive
- Keep a list of your tag line & network settings update alternatives filed so you can just swap your 'standard' ones around

Location

[Bath, United Kingdom](#)

Industry

[Marketing and Advertising](#)


Debbie Newman is an interim marketing strategist delivering increased revenue and profit growth 14 days ago [[Update](#)]


3. Don't keep LinkedIn a secret –

Add to your email signature – and you can personalise how your LinkedIn link looks too – see below. You can also connect with people through your email links and not just when on your profile page

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 <http://uk.linkedin.com/in/debbienewmanatarmstrongbeech> - though you have to link to full profile from here. (Plus of course your disclaimer and opt out sentences below this lot)

Make sure it's on your Website and add to your business cards next time you reprint!

4. Add people to your Outlook contacts when you met them

- a. When you first join LinkedIn, invite your contacts on Outlook etc to join - you can get a whole list of who amongst your contacts is on LinkedIn. You don't have to invite everyone – it's by selection, not default. There's an 'Importing your contacts' info sheet under the 'help' directory or go to Tools on the bottom of your home page with Linked In and import button is there. The latter also will show you your frequent email senders/recipients to see if they should be added.
- b. And if you go to 'contacts' along the top tab, go to 'add contacts' (which does the same as (a) but you can also then choose to add colleagues and classmates
- c. If you're looking for someone, then use the search function and go into 'advanced search' so you limit by country and any other criteria you choose
- d. When someone who was on my Outlook originally subsequently joins 'LinkedIn', I get an 'alert' to say that they have joined, and it's an opportunity to say welcome and invite them to join you. And now that I've prepared this paper, I can send them a copy of this to help them on their LinkedIn way!
- e. Keeping a note of date and venue of where you met someone on your Outlook contact is really helpful so you can refer back if necessary!

- f. Whenever you work with a new business, see who from the company is on LinkedIn and invite to join, if appropriate.
- g. If one of your clients/customers leaves his/her company, you may be able to track him/her through LinkedIn and maintain the relationship in the new business.
- h. Check your settings: > Account>Email Notifications> Network Updates – select weekly or daily. This will give you a two line summary of those people in your network and changes they have made to their profile. Really useful update.

5. Who's viewed my profile?

- a. Half way down on RH side on home page
- b. But, before you get too excited, mine shows as

“Your profile has been viewed by **5 people** in the last **3 days**, including:

[Someone in the Leadership function in the Marketing and Advertising industry from Bath, United Kingdom](#)“

NB: Full details aren't necessarily available as it depends on individual's own privacy settings.

6. Sales Acceleration

- a. If you've got a meeting with a new client, see what you can learn about them – do you share any connections? What are their hobbies or interests? Show that you've done your homework.
- b. With existing customers/clients, see who they know and ask for a referral if appropriate.
- c. You could search for people in your prospect's company who are not involved directly in what you do. If they are a 2nd degree contact, ask for a referral and this is where trusted relationships count for a lot. You could forward your contact an email asking him/her to on-forward it to your 'wanted' contact with a request that they call/email you. If such a request for contact came from a few sources, then it would be powerful – too many and annoying, though!
- d. When you have an introduction, you could ask for an 'informational' interview. Ask your interviewee about any key factors that might be influencing the buying process right now. Be completely open/transparent. (I haven't used this personally yet)
- e. If you have a really good solution/referral to a true 'friend of a friend' then it's a win-win.

7. Groups

- a. Find those groups which are relevant to your business – go to the groups directory and search - they may be groups that are alumni, industry, local business groups,
- b. Look for the groups people have joined within your business type and see if they look appropriate; ditto people with whom you work;
- c. If you offer a service or product locally, check out the local business/chamber type of groups – such a good and easy way to get your name known locally
- d. Share information to links eg podcasts or if your company is hosting a webinar
- e. When someone invites you to join them on LinkedIn, see to which groups they belong and see if appropriate for you
- f. Join in on the discussions – great way to promote your name out there, but remember this is not a 'selling medium' though there's quite a lot of people out there who don't seem to understand this concept. By 'giving' information and advice you are promoting yourself without directly 'selling'. Keep it brief and to the point. Don't waffle.
- g. Great place to show your expertise in your field by linking to a 'white paper'/e-book/article on your website about the very subject under discussion!
- h. BUT when signing up to belong to groups, consider how many emails you want popping into your inbox – daily or weekly? It's easy to change though!
- i. If you need ideas/suggestions then this is also a great forum to receive help.
- j. And why not start your own group?

Check out the Answers (Q&A) – go to the More... tab along the top

- a. If you can offer help and advice to a question it creates a relationship with that one person and also endorses your expertise to everyone else who reads
- b. Answers are linked to your profile
- c. Make sure you give quality information
- d. Especially powerful if you have specialist knowledge in 'techy' areas.
- e. If you have an answer which is more fully dealt with on your website or blog, then link to this.
- f. People can vote on answers, which counts towards your 'expert' rating
- g. Great forum if you need specific feedback on some research or a topic you're investigating or you need external expertise?

8. Recommendations

- a. Ask for one/two liner recommendations for you/your business-service – explain that you are building your 'on line' brand and that if they felt that the work/service you provided for them exceeded their expectations, then you'd really appreciate them writing a brief recommendation on LinkedIn.
- b. You want them to be balanced views giving good endorsements but not too OTT.
- c. These also show up in summary on the weekly LinkedIn update
- d. Personally I always think it looks 'contrived' when you see two people recommending each other at the same time!
- e. Take time to give recommendations as well
- f. Where someone gives you a reference but doesn't want their name/ business name attached, it can still go onto your website, but it doesn't carry the weight if you just put DN or 'company from Bath'....

9. Don't sell overtly

- a. Rather, think about how you can communicate by helping/giving; trying to 'sell' won't help you/your brand on LinkedIn in the long term.
- b. Start a discussion thread about something topical within your industry and to which people will contribute – see the sort of discussions that attract a good following
- c. Or maybe something challenging!

10. Advertising – you can select a 'pay per click' option rather like Google Ad words, with the plus that you can be very selective about your target market (not free)

11. Use its applications – Go to More... at top of home page>drop down, or some of the key ones are below 'experience' in your profile

- a. Lots of social networking...
- a. You can post a power point presentation (slide share or Google), add a video, feed into your blog (word press and blog link) and add PDF files or word documents (box net), announce and RSVP events, conduct polls, share the books you're reading (Amazon) and Twitter (you can link Twitter to your Linked In account – really useful. Currently this is not poss with Facebook (April 2010)
- b. Believe <http://www.jingproject.com> good if you want to add a video (free software). It will allow you to record a 5 minute screen capture as a video.

And lastly, three golden rules:

- ✓ Be patient and take the long-term approach
- ✓ Try to keep the same tone when you leave messages as this will be your 'voice'. Whilst you don't want to waffle, you also don't want to sound curt
- ✓ Be constant – try to allocate some time daily and keep to that. Half an hour would be great, particularly when starting, as there's a lot to do and learn.

I hope this has been helpful. *Here's LinkedIn's own link to its learning pages:*

<http://learn.linkedin.com/training/>

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