

3 WAYS TO LEVERAGE LINKEDIN TO ENHANCE YOUR CAREER

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In today’s modern world, we are more connected than ever. And for professionals, there is no better platform to be on than LinkedIn. But just having an account isn’t enough! Here are three tips to leverage your LinkedIn profile to enhance your professional presence.

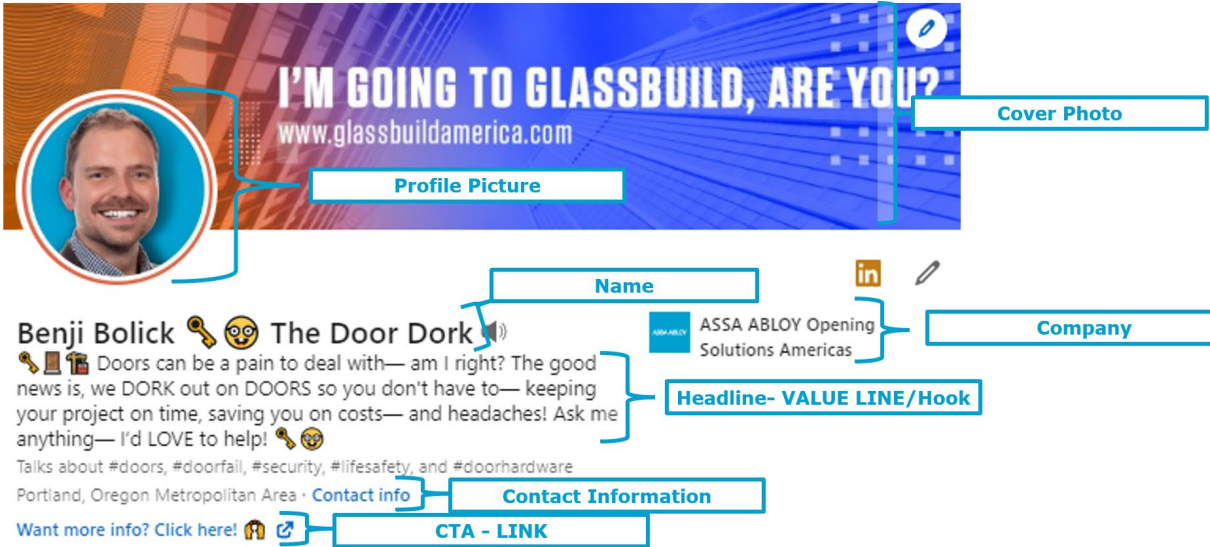
Tip #1 - Optimize Your Profile

LinkedIn *wants* to share your profile with others. That’s how LinkedIn offers value to people utilizing its platform.

However, LinkedIn will not share your profile with others if it is incomplete and is not optimized for adding value to others. Simply put, why would LinkedIn share a profile with others if they know it won’t add value?

One of the easiest ways of optimizing your profile is filling out all the features available on your profile. Doing this will increase the chances of your name showing up on search results by 30-40% (according to the research *Just Connecting* with their *4th Annual LinkedIn Algorithm Research, Nov. 2022*)

Let’s look at each section individually:



Profile Feature Tips to Consider:

- **Profile Picture:** First impressions are essential to making digital connections. Having a warm, inviting profile picture with good lighting can be the difference of whether someone clicks connect or not. Try to avoid any distractions like sunglasses, hats, or remnants of a cropped photo.
- **Cover Photo:** PLEASE... PLEASE... Please... update your cover photo! This is the most underutilized space to add value to your connections. After your profile picture, this will be where your potential connections look. What do you think the default

gloomy-grey box is telling your professional stalkers? Check with your marketing department and see if they can help you create a cover photo (or use one that you already have), or utilize free tools like Canva to create your own (they have LinkedIn cover photo templates already built in).

*The example I'm showing above is a brilliant idea from the National Glass Association, sending out event promotional messages formatted to fit cover photos to registered attendees! *

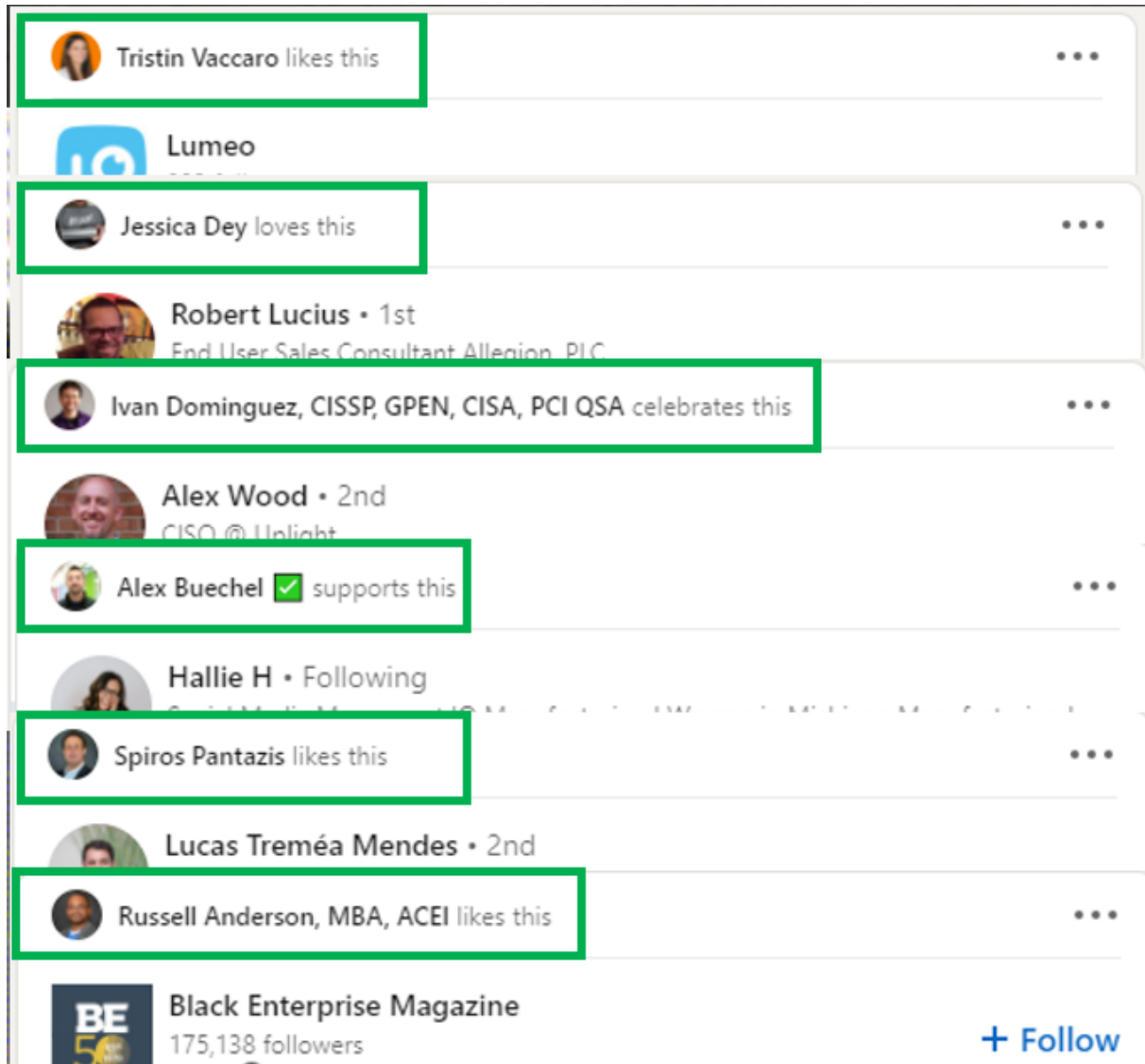
- **Name:** This might seem silly to most of you, but you would be surprised by how many people don't use their real name on LinkedIn. Also, make sure your privacy notifications are set to where anyone can view your name and profile. How are they supposed to connect with you if they can't find you?
- **Headline...or what I call The Value Line:** Most people put their title and the company they work for. Not only is this boring, but your company logo is right next to your name, maybe even in your cover photo, and your position is two inches down on your profile page. You could (maybe) justify having your title here if you're the CEO, owner, founder or even vice president/C-Suite level of your company (we get it...you are special), but why waste this precious space on redundant and invaluable information? Instead, tell your potential connections how you can help them and what problems you can help them solve! See... the VALUE Line!
- **Contact Info:** I know... I know... we could all use a little less spam, and having your contact information available could increase some of that from happening, but what if your potential connections wanted to reach out to you for more information? What if they prefer to send emails or call or even text? I find in most cases it's better to have too many people trying to get a hold of you than no people!
- **Call to Action** – Thanks to a recent LinkedIn update, you can now add a URL website link/call to action on our profile page! This is a fantastic opportunity to drive traffic to a landing page or company website to help generate leads.
- **About Section & Highlighted Posts** – Help build digital rapport with your connections by leveraging the “about” section and highlighted posts. Both sections are great spots to introduce yourself and share more about how you could add value to your LinkedIn connections. Want to take it one step further? Film a quick 30-second video introducing yourself, and pin that post to your highlighted posts.

LinkedIn wants to share your profile with others but won't share it if it stinks. Why not **optimize your profile** to take advantage of all the networking opportunities LinkedIn will share with you? By taking the time to fill out these areas, you're on your way to a better LinkedIn experience for yourself and those you're connecting with.

Tip #2 – Engagement is KEY

Besides optimizing your profile, engaging on LinkedIn can be the easiest way to get your name out there. Have you ever scrolled through your feed before and asked yourself, “Why am I seeing this post?”

LinkedIn leverages algorithms to generate a large chunk of your customized content based on what your connections “comment” and “like.” The idea is that if your connections find this information valuable, then you might as well. And when those posts show up in your connections feed, it points to you as the origin point. For example:



Therefore, the more you like, react to (love, support, laughing...), comment and share, the more your name will pop up in other people's feeds. And being in front of people is great for building connections.

If you're looking to increase your visibility on this platform, start by setting aside 15 minutes a day to react and comment on posts that provide genuine value to you, and you'll naturally start getting more and more people viewing your (optimized) profile.

However, not all engagement is created equal. **Commenting on posts is the most valuable form of engagement**, and here's why:

A comment increases the reach of a post by **+8%** within the creator's network AND increases reach by **+6%** with the person's network who commented on the post! Let's look at this more closely:

Let's say Marc creates a post. That post will only organically reach a small percent of Marc's network (8-10%). But, when Kelsey comments on Marc's post, it now reaches an additional 8% of Marc's network, totaling 16-18%. From Kelsey's perspective, that same post will now be shared with 6% of her network. What do you think would happen if Marc's post got 100 comments?!

Because comments are compounding, they are the key to boosting your engagement on LinkedIn. Next time you are thinking about throwing a thumbs up on a post, consider typing out a quick comment instead. Not only are you helping the content creator reach a larger audience but you are also helping yourself get more visibility.

Bringing back to our first point, LinkedIn prioritizes comments because if people are talking about the content, it must be valuable in one way or another.

This leads us perfectly to the last tip...

Tip #3 – Consistently Create Valuable Content

This tip may come as a surprise to some, as it's the most common mistake I see people make when publishing content. Are you ready to hear my advice?

NO ONE USES LINKEDIN TO BE SOLD TO.

No one logs in to LinkedIn thinking to themselves... "Hmm... I hope hundreds of people pitch me their product today." So, stop only posting promotional posts and salesy widgets and lead with genuine and value-based interactions.

Your connections are, first and foremost, PEOPLE. They want to be engaged, entertained, educated and empowered. So, unless your post is adding value to their personal or professional life, the chances of them engaging are low (and we all know what happens to posts that don't get engagement).

Sure, LinkedIn is an excellent place to sell products and solutions, but trying to sell through spammy posts won't get you very far. Instead, focus on building relationships by serving and adding value to your network...the rest will follow.

So, what is valuable content?

Only you can truly know what's valuable to your ideal business connections. But here are some questions to asking yourself to help consistently come up with valuable content to share:

- How can I better serve and add value to my network?
- What types of content might entertain my ideal connections?
- What are some topics or subjects my ideal connections might want to learn more about?
- What might get my ideal connections to engage with a post?
- What are common pain points of my ideal connections, and how can I provide solutions?

Once you better understand your ideal business connections, you can then craft content to add value to them.

Here are some other ideas to help generate value-based content:

- Set up a Google Alert for industry keywords for curated articles, news updates, blog posts and any other new information straight to your inbox. Share these articles directly on LinkedIn or pull out golden nuggets of value to post the insights yourself.
- Ask an industry-specific question and spark a conversation. You'll be surprised who shows up to share their opinion.
- People you have built a relationship with will want to know what you are up to – use LinkedIn to document your journey. For example, if you are working on something exciting, don't be afraid to share a teaser or some of the behind-the-scenes work.
- Don't be afraid to be transparent with your network – share with them who are you and how can you help them. Just don't make this too “salesy.”
- Get personal but keep it professional. Showing a bit of your personal life will help your network see you as a person/human, and after all, isn't business built on people trusting people?

Bonus Tip: Consistency is KEY

Show up each day with an optimized profile, engage with your network and share valuable content. If you do these three tips each day (even just for 15 minutes) you will immediately see results, meaning you will grow your network and position yourself as the trusted industry leader you are!