

Job Seekers: Polish Your LinkedIn Profile

As the use of social media in the hiring process has grown in popularity over the last several years, recruiters and hiring managers aren't hiding from it. In fact, they're using technology tools such as LinkedIn as a pre-interview tactic to narrow down candidates for job openings.

To find out what they're looking for, I interviewed technology recruiters and HR experts. Based on their comments, you might decide it's time to polish your LinkedIn profile.

What's important to hiring managers/recruiters

Screening a LinkedIn profile is similar to screening a resume. *"The candidate initially gets about 30 seconds of my time to entice me to keep reading,"* says Jennifer Olsen, president of [Resourceful HR](#). *"The most important thing I look for is relevant experience compared to my open position. Providing testimonials and endorsements that further support that experience also helps me know that the candidate is serious about the information they are trying to convey."*

Because reviewers give candidates only a short amount of time to catch their attention, the Background Summary section is critical. *"Job seekers should post a thorough Summary about their professional experience and what they're trying to sell or market about themselves to prospective employers,"* recommends Amy Giustino, regional managing director at [Resources Global Professionals](#).

Telling your work "story" is also important. *"The candidate's profile should clearly present their experience and how they have progressed throughout their career, including the use of easily understood titles,"* says Cindy Olsen, VP of HR at [Concur Technologies](#).

Turn-offs when viewing candidates' profiles

One of the biggest negatives of everyone I interviewed was an incomplete profile. *"If a candidate doesn't complete their profile with their relevant experience, it makes it hard to determine their qualifications when recruiting,"* says Jason Woolwine, senior recruiter at [Apptio, Inc.](#)

Another issue is when the online profile doesn't match the person's resume, such as different dates, job titles, job descriptions or education. *"We see it happen all the time and it raises some red flags,"* Woolwine says.

"We are turned off by candidates who don't have a complete job history, who didn't give a brief description of their responsibilities in each position or who indicated they aren't looking for new opportunities," adds TJ Floyd, managing partner at [Prodigy Resources](#). Floyd recommends that candidates *"keep their profiles updated and indicate whether or not they want to hear about new opportunities."*

Other big negatives are poor grammar and bad pictures. *"Bad grammar and spelling or appearing to leave out details can translate into the perception that the individual is lazy, doesn't care or is hiding something,"* Olsen says.

In addition, *"profile pictures that lack professional judgment can appear to the recruiter that the candidate lacks professionalism,"* adds Giustino.



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What an incomplete profile says about you

All of those interviewed recommend that candidates take time to fill in key areas. *"The more descriptive their profile is, the more likely the candidate will be called about positions that are a fit for them,"* notes Evan Harris, client services manager at Prodigy Resources.

"If a person is serious about a job search, it's best to complete their LinkedIn profile," says Giustino. *"By completing the profile, you help your job search by fully marketing your background to recruiters."*

Source: Lisa Quast via Forbes.com

