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LinkedIn: Your BFF on the Job Hunt

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Okay, before we actually get into the meat of this article, I just want to say this now: If you already have a LinkedIn account and you visit your colleagues' profiles, you probably have caught a typo, or a formatting 'oops,' or some other kind of error. If so, open **LinkedIn** in a new tab *right now* and send your friend the following message:

Hi [Friend],

I was just browsing your profile, and I think it looks [complimentary adjective]! I noticed something small that I wanted to bring to your attention: [Describe the typo/error in one or two respectful sentences]. I just wanted to let you know because I would want someone to do the same for me.

I hope you're doing well!

-[Your Name]

Back? Great. Don't you feel a little bit better now?

Anyway, back to the point: Social media is king now in hiring, and job seekers need to know that their LinkedIn profile may even be used to narrow down which candidates will receive an interview or an offer.

In [Lisa Quast's article "Job Seekers: Polish Your LinkedIn Profile,"](#) Quast highlights the following elements as important to hiring managers and recruiters:

- You only have 30 seconds to capture their attention, so write a great Background Summary including what you're trying to market about yourself.
- Use the rest of your profile to tell your story! Show your experience and how your career has progressed.
- Finish what you started: Recruiters are turned off by incomplete profiles.
- Check your facts: Make sure the dates on your resume and your LinkedIn profile match, or face potential elimination over a silly mistake.
- Interested? Don't say you're not. While it can feel hard to job hunt while currently employed, don't let your LinkedIn account work against your efforts.
- Fix your grammar and spelling to put your best foot forward.
- A picture is worth a thousand words. Use a professional-looking photo.

While much of this advice speaks for itself, I also recommend the following:

- Determine your own comfort levels with the information that you share. LinkedIn offers fairly comprehensive control over who can see what. If you don't want your current employer to know that you're looking (or you plan to make comprehensive updates and don't want to broadcast everything to your connections), restrict the sharing of updates. If you want anonymous potential connections to know about your current position, but not historic ones, LinkedIn offers that capability as well.
- Try to get an action shot, like you presenting at a conference, to use as your profile picture. Why do I suggest this? Check out this [LinkedIn blog post](#) by Jason Seiden. Pay it forward—take pictures of your colleagues when they're in the spotlight, and ask them to do the same for you.
- On the spelling and grammar front: Run your profile through a spelling check, or team up with a trusted friend and proofread for each other.

What's worked best for you in the world of LinkedIn? Share your advice or experience in the comments!

