



## The Bella Domain Media LinkedIn Profile Makeover

*Set yourself up for personal branding success on LinkedIn®*

By **Sandy Jones-Kaminski**

**A few words about this makeover tool...** You probably created a profile years ago, but haven't paid it much attention since. This is a do-it-yourself makeover designed to maximize your LinkedIn profile and help you connect and be discovered on LinkedIn. With this tool you'll identify a few things to add, as well as delete, so give yourself about an hour to go through this checklist and you'll likely see an increase in your visibility on LinkedIn in no time at all. **Tip:** Write down the number of Profile Views you're currently getting and then check again 30 days after completing the makeover.

**Remember, completeness matters...** Be sure you've added your relevant professional information and have requested at least two recommendations for your most recent positions. **Fact:** Users with complete profiles are 40 times more likely to receive opportunities through LinkedIn. Here are 7 things that make your profile register as complete on the platform:

1. Your industry and location
2. An up-to-date current position (with a description and a minimum of 200 characters)
3. Two past positions
4. Your education
5. Your skills (minimum of 3)
6. A profile photo (unless you're a vet, no animals in these photos please, and a smile is best!)
7. At least 50 connections

### Now, start at the top of your profile and complete these 15 easy steps:

1. Is your **name** Elizabeth, but everyone refers to you as Beth? Your LinkedIn Profile is not a legal representation, so use the name by which everyone knows you and the one they would type in when doing a search for you.

2. Check that your **Headline** states what you offer or the value you deliver. Your professional headline is displayed in search results as well as when someone hovers over your name, and can be separate from the title of your current position. You can edit it to promote an area of expertise. For example, if you're the owner of or a director for a senior healthcare services company, you might say, "Senior Care Facilities Expert." What would you do a search on if you were looking for someone like yourself? Remember, there's a place for title/job function by your company's listing in your Experience section.

3. Your **Current** positions can be moved around within the **Experience** section so that those you want listed at the top can be ranked in the order you'd prefer. Look for the up and down arrow icon in the upper-right corner.

4. In order for your profile to be considered complete, **Education** should not be left blank. It should have something in it whether you have a college degree or not. You can include your high school information, the "School of Hard Knocks" or even the coursework you may have completed at a higher learning institution you can name.

5. **Recommendations:** Did you know that you don't have to include all the recommendations you receive? There is a way to indicate you don't want them displayed within the Recommendations section, which you can get to via Privacy & Settings. Consider only displaying those that are most relevant to your current business or career goals. You can even move them around and/or display only the very best recos in those visible top 2 spots.

6. Seriously consider whether you want to display the list of your **Connections** to all your other connections. You can go into Privacy & Settings to change this. (I usually recommend making them visible only to you.)

7. Activate your **Website links** since you can have up to 3 of them. You can include your company's URL, a direct link to your blog, or a popular column you recently had featured on Huffington Post, or even a charity for which you're on the board. It could also be a link to your portfolio site or an Amazon page for your book (as I did). Use the Other option to create a branded label for the link. (Doing this is good for search engine optimization as well as branding!)

8. You can share your LinkedIn status updates on **Twitter** if you've added your Twitter account to your LinkedIn profile via Privacy & Settings. Just be mindful of the length of your update, and if you've attached a link, LinkedIn will shrink it.

9. Create a unique and personalized **public URL**. For example, mine is <http://www.linkedin.com/in/sandyjk>. LinkedIn allows you to change the link to your profile from a nonsensical string to your name or that of your business. Look under "Profile" then "Edit Profile" to find "Public Profile" and carefully consider whether you want to use your name, business name or a nickname in the URL. Also known as a "vanity url," this is a great link to then share in your email signatures or even on your business cards, if you don't yet have a website you're proud of, or a non-profit for which you're a board member, or an About.me or similar page.

10. Use your **Summary** as you might a *conversational* elevator pitch, cover letter or biography, but make sure that your personality (authentic self) comes through and **write this section in the first person**. Leave the robotic resume speak for the specific job listing within your profile, but even there, let SEO (search engine optimization) tactics guide your descriptions. Focus on words you think a prospect, recruiter or decision maker looking for someone like you would use to search the vast LinkedIn database. An old perception that LinkedIn is just your resume online is incorrect. Your LinkedIn profile Summary is a less formal way to present your career story to the professional world.

11. **Skills & Endorsements:** LinkedIn made it possible for you to list (and reorder) your skills and areas of expertise in this section. Your Connections can then endorse you for those areas in which they have experience working with you. If you find you keep getting endorsements for things you're not interested in highlighting, you can always delete the skill. You can opt-out of Endorsements, but I don't advise it because they factor into SEO and LinkedIn recommends 3 as a minimum.

12. **Groups:** Take a good hard look at the number of groups you have displayed in your profile. LinkedIn now allows you to be a member of more than 50 groups, but you do not need to display them all to anyone that looks at your profile. Think about displaying only those that are relevant to YOUR business or industry, or that reinforce your brand. (I'm in many groups on behalf of my clients or investors I know, so I don't typically displays those.)

13. **Publications and Papers:** Include only the best of your best when adding books, ebooks, white papers or published articles and, again, only share those relevant to your target or current business or industry.

14. Add **Media:** LinkedIn has made it possible to add work examples to your profile. I refer to these as "pieces of flair" and the types of media they accept includes images, audio files, PDFs, videos, presentations and documents. Items can be added, edited, moved or removed from your **Edit Profile** page. Look for this in the Summary section.

15. **Personal Info:** Most pros recommend that you leave off your birthday and marital status. After all, LinkedIn is not a dating site and birthdays seem more appropriate for a few of the other less professional social networking platforms.

**Sandy Jones-Kaminski** is the Chief Connecting Officer at Bella Domain Media and the author of the #1 pick on the 2010 Inc.com Business Book Wish List titled, ["I'm at a Networking Event--Now What???: A Guide To Getting the Most Out of Any Networking Event."](#) As a business mentor with 20+ yrs of marketing and business development experience, she helps executives, entrepreneurs and business owners establish thought leadership, market their brands and generate leads through an unique process that maximizes LinkedIn, online and offline networking tactics, social selling tactics and custom content strategies. [More at belladomainmedia.com](http://www.belladomainmedia.com).

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