Anatomy of LinkedIn Cheat Sheet

If you aren't currently on LinkedIn, a good starting point is to understand the basics. If you are on LinkedIn, you may find that it changes so often that a review of terminology is helpful.

Your Profile

Your LinkedIn profile serves as your online resume. You create a profile using your name and email address. Then, you add information such as your photo, job title, education, and experience. There are several main parts of a profile including:

Headline: Your headline appears just under your name and should include what you do and who you serve. This is searchable by keyword and must be 120 characters or less.

Summary: This 2,000 character summary of your expertise and experience is also searchable by Google to help people find you, both from the LinkedIn internal search function and from a Google search. You should use this space to showcase a brief bio and explain your specialties. It's important to note that you can upload videos, blog posts, and websites to your summary.

Experience: The experience section is similar to a resume where you list former employers and work experience.

Education: Similar to a resume, the education section of your profile is where you list which schools you attended, the degrees you earned, and any organizations you were involved in.

Posts: The LinkedIn publishing platform is essentially a blog within your profile where you can publish original content and share with your network. These articles are different than updates because all of your connections are notified when you publish a post and your posts permanently reside on your profile.

Publications: This is where you list books you have authored or relevant publications.

Certifications: Include any licenses or credentials here such as CFP®, AIF®, and securities licenses.

Recommendations: Recommendations are text comments similar to a letter of recommendation that is featured permanently on your profile. They are helpful for job seekers. FINRA does not allow recommendations because they could be seen as testimonials.

Endorsements: This feature allows your first degree connections to "endorse" you for a skill with just one click. They are searchable by skill and are also helpful for job seekers and recruiters. Most large broker-dealers do not allow endorsements.

Your Network

Your 1ˢᵗ Degree Connections: These are individuals you are connected with on LinkedIn, similar to "friends" on Facebook. You can message these connections directly and view their profiles.

Your 2ⁿᵈ Degree Connections: The connections of your connections are your 2nd degree connections. You can view more of their profile than someone who you are not connected with and you may request to connect with them directly. You can also search these connections and ask for an introduction to third degree and out of network contacts.

Group Members: People who belong to the same LinkedIn groups are considered part of your network. You are able to send a message to them directly using the group message feature.

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Advanced Search
The advanced search function allows you to search LinkedIn's member database to find prospects or people you'd like to connect with. The search criteria are vast, including job title (past or present), keyword, seniority level, postal code, company, etc. We'll review this tool in detail later in the book.

Sponsored Posts
These ads are posts that have been sponsored to show up in the activity feed of their targeted prospects. You can create a sponsored post to show up in the activity feed for a group of prospects, such as Engineering CEOs within 10 miles of your office.

Company Page
A LinkedIn Company Page is a profile for your business. You can share company information, products, and news on this page and individuals may follow updates from your page directly.

Company Page Followers
LinkedIn users that click "follow" on your company page recieve updates in their activity feed when you post to that page.

Inbox
Your LinkedIn inbox is where you can send, view, and receive LinkedIn messages. The messaging feature must be captured by compliance archiving software and may not be approved, so check with your compliance department before using this feature.

InMail
InMail messages are LinkedIn emails that you can send directly to any LinkedIn member, from Janet Yellen to Bill Gates, even if you're not connected. You can purchase InMail credits and they are only redeemed if you get a response.

LinkedIn Message
LinkedIn messages are free to your first degree connections and fellow group members. This is a cost effective and quick way to reach out to your network. The messaging feature must be captured by compliance archiving software and may not be approved, so check with your compliance department before using this feature.

Mention
You can mention a person or a company page in an update. They are automatically notified that you have mentioned them in your status.

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LinkedIn Groups

LinkedIn Groups provide a place for professionals in the same industry or with similar interests to share content, ask questions, and post jobs. I recommend joining groups where your prospects reside and sharing content valuable content within the groups.

Group Announcement

A group announcement is sent to the email inbox of every member of the group. They can only be sent every 7 days and must be sent by a group administrator.

LinkedIn Influencer

LinkedIn Influencer is the designation given to approximately 500 professionals who were invited to publish on LinkedIn before the publishing platform was opened up to all members. The list includes Richard Branson, Bill Gates, Arianna Huffington, and David Cameron.

LinkedIn Pulse

The LinkedIn Pulse app was built as a class project at Stanford University in 2010 with a goal of delivering custom news tailored to you based on your network. With pulse, you get custom activity feeds based on what is trending among your connections.