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4 LinkedIn red flags to avoid if you want to get head hunted

LinkedIn is a powerful tool, and one that we need to learn how to use better. Getting your profile up to scratch can land you that dream job says *Kara Atkinson*.



THE EXPERT

Kara Atkinson is an Executive Recruitment expert with 18 years' experience in helping people continue to build and transform themselves throughout their careers.

Almost 9 million Australians have a LinkedIn profile and the average user spends 17 minutes per month using this powerful networking tool. LinkedIn is critical in your job search, so how should you customise your profile to make sure you are getting views for the roles you are going after?

Your LinkedIn profile right now is a direct reflection of your resume. The beauty of LinkedIn is that you can do something that has an impact, that is different, that still leverages from the work you have done with your resume, but also positions you in an entirely new way.

Jane Anderson, Australia's LinkedIn branding expert, says LinkedIn is not an obituary—it's about positioning. It's a snapshot that speaks to the role that you want, rather than just what you have done in the past.

LinkedIn by design is a search engine. A powerful one. For its users and its audience, this means that if you mirror your language and your summary with the position that you are going for, the employer will get your profile at the very top of the search results.

RED FLAG #1 Buzz words

Critical first steps entail research. A common mistake is to use buzz words. LinkedIn says for the past three years, the most overused profile word is 'motivated'. To combat this, print out

job advertisements, assess the common language and terminology and then deliberately integrate that language into your LinkedIn summary field and into your experience field to ensure that you are that first search result returned to prospective employers.

RED FLAG #2 No photo

People are hesitant about the option to upload headshots on LinkedIn and whether it should or shouldn't be there—the consensus is it absolutely should be there. And the data backs this up. Having a professional LinkedIn photo makes your profile 14 times more likely to be viewed. Casual, social or badly cropped images are not the benchmark for your profile photo.

Take a look at your photo now; does it reflect the roles that you're aspiring to? Is it appropriate and does it place you in the exact right light for the kinds of roles you desire?

97 percent of recruiters are looking at you online before they decide to pick up the phone, so it's worth spending the time, and the money, to get that corporate headshot right.

RED FLAG #3 No Network

Taking on board these simple tips will now see your profile starting to look solid. So, what do you do with it? How do you become truly engaged on this network? You start by actively building your network and your connections.

If you're currently active in your job search, the recommendations are that you should have at least 300 or more connections. It is critical that you increase your activity on LinkedIn. Join groups that are specific to your line of work, read, share and like posts, reach out and connect with colleagues and co-workers, past and present.

There are innovative, selective groups that are specific—seek out these groups and start engaging with them.

There is a tiny minority of people on LinkedIn that are writing and sharing blogs. If you get in that minority it's a fast track opportunity to broaden your online visibility and build your connections.

RED FLAG #4 Invisible

Kylie Hammond, CEO of Board Portfolio, an Australian organisation that helps senior executives get into board roles, shares that clients of hers won't even shortlist candidates if they don't have a LinkedIn profile.

It's a missed opportunity if you don't have your profile on point. Make sure to invest the time and attention required to get your LinkedIn profile right, so you are being shortlisted for the role you want. ✖

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