

The power of your LinkedIn profile

 By [Juliette Attwell](#)

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In this week's BizCareers column we look at how to use your LinkedIn profile effectively, as well as the pitfalls of job-hopping.

I would like to use LinkedIn more to network and possibly find a new career. How can I do this effectively? - Delwin

Hi Delwin,

There really is no short answer to this. Social media can be used incredibly well to position yourself as an asset, especially on LinkedIn.



LinkedIn is the "world's largest professional network" and can be viewed as your online curriculum vitae. If used correctly it can boost your professional persona and get your name out in your industry of choice. Maintenance of your LinkedIn profile is as important as submitting an up-to-date, comprehensive CV to a prospective employer. Make sure your profile is updated and coherent at all times. Like Facebook, there are also ways of making sure that you are viewed in an honest and positive light.

- 1. Your profile and information** - Make sure it is up-to-date, honest and reflective of your professional history. Make sure your timeline of positions are correct and in order. Always add a brief description of what your current role entails as it offers more insight into your professional credibility and makes it easier for recruiters and future employers to qualify you as a potential candidate. A good way of backing up your duties and showing off your skills is getting past or current colleagues or employers to add recommendations to your profile. This serves as a quick and efficient reference.
- 2. The people you are connected to** - Not only will your connections help you seek out potential career opportunities, but they will allow you to be introduced to a new connection that will potentially uncover an uncharted job opportunity. Your connections and the people you are associated with speak volumes about your professional identity as well as open doors for business opportunities for you and your current company.
- 3. Your contact details** - Make sure your contact details are correct. Don't let your dream job pass you by due to the fact that the recruitment consultant or future employer was unable to get hold of you. Make sure that your profile states that you are in fact open to career opportunities, as leaving out this small statement can prevent potential recruiters and employers from knocking on your door.
- 4. Lastly, the companies, industries and schools that you are connected to** - Make sure you are connected to the top companies in your industry; this will make you aware and able to apply for all the latest openings within your dream company. Listing the schools you attended will not only connect you with successful alumni, but will also open doors in companies you were not aware of. Alumni associations are extremely powerful tools as they not only serve as a reference to your character but also link you to other contacts that you might not have known.

I hope this helps, and please let me know how it goes.



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Job-hopping

I have been in my current role for two years and would like to change. What is considered job-hopping, and how often can I change jobs? - Elsa

Hi Elsa,

Thanks for your question.

From a recruiters perspective, a job-hopper is considered to be someone that has stayed in a job for less than two years, and has continued this pattern for more than three jobs in a row.

The only time this track record is acceptable is if you are a contractor and your particular contract is complete, for health or personal reasons, the company closed, liquidated or retrenched or you were expected to relocate. If the reasons are to voluntarily leave before two years for no good reason other than a better salary, "to see what else is out there" or for growth, then you really need to relook at your career path and what it is you really want. Companies do not look favourably at job-hoppers at all, you are a flight risk, an investment risk and overall not interested in the bigger picture.

There are industries where length of service isn't too important; the IT industry is slightly more lenient for example as technologies change continuously and companies want to see growth and development. In contrast however, in the sales industry it takes years to build up a good solid client base and a short tenure may merely be an indication of poor performance. So consider all your options before making the active step of moving jobs. If you have been at a company for three to five years and you can see from the rate of promotions among colleagues and yourself that growth within the company is limited, it would be fair to consider a change. Before making a hasty decision though, it may be wise to speak to one of your superiors and ask what the potential for growth within the department is and what other avenues are available in the company that you could explore that might satisfy your need for growth.

The key is to make sure there isn't a pattern of short service on your CV (less than two years). If it happened once or twice due to circumstances out of your control, it's acceptable, any more than this and the potential employer will start questioning your integrity and performance.

It is often very worthwhile to take on a new opportunity at a new company, however sometimes the potential for an exciting change is right at your front doorstep - the key is to see the opportunity.

Remember to always love what you do!

Juliette

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ABOUT JULIETTE ATTWELL

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