

# Ellie Rich-Poole

The Recruitment Coach

## The Recruitment Coach LinkedIn Guide

This guide takes you through the steps to create a great first impression using your LinkedIn Profile.

But let's start with the WHY. Why does it matter? These quotes resonated with me:

**"Your brand is what people say about you when you aren't in the room"** (Jeff Bezos). So, whether or not we like it, we all have a personal "brand".

**"If you're not branding yourself, you can be sure others do it for you"** (Unknown).

And if we don't manage it, others will be deciding about us for themselves. So, by not having a strong LinkedIn profile, that in itself says something. Apply the same principles as you would to present yourself in person. Consider the language you use and how you show up in the world.

If you are reading this guide because you are looking for a new role, or are soon to be, it is super important. Today, your LinkedIn Profile may be the first thing people see of "you".

WHAT is your LinkedIn Profile? LinkedIn themselves define it as "a professional landing page for you to manage your own personal brand. A great way for you to tell people who you are and what you do by displaying a general history of your professional experiences and achievements. Use your LinkedIn profile to add a personal touch that a typical resume or CV may not reflect."

There are three key parts to this guide:

1. Writing a great LinkedIn profile
2. Using LinkedIn to keep in touch with your existing connections
3. Using LinkedIn to grow your connections and be discoverable

I am going to take you through some tips for each of these.

This advice is particularly relevant for individuals in the Corporate world and those networking in organisations at Professional, Leadership or Executive level.

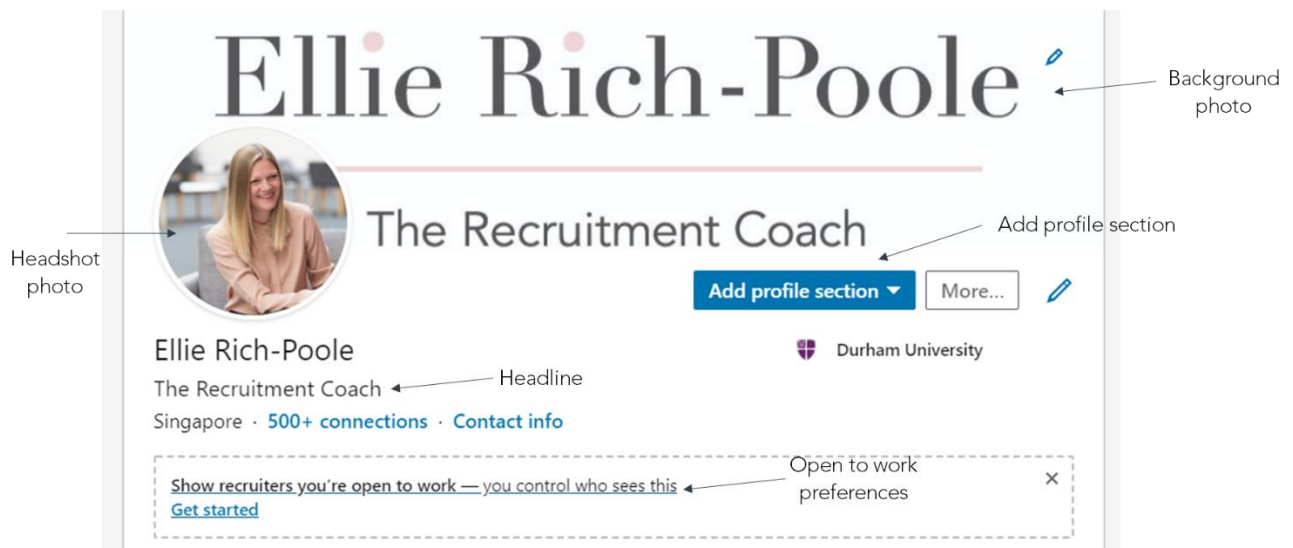
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## 1. Writing a great LinkedIn profile



**TIP!:** Whilst editing your profile, make sure you turn off the “sharing profile changes with your network” facility (instructions [here](#)), otherwise your connections may get notified when you have updated your profile and you start getting congratulations messages which is awkward. Yes. I have been there.



**Add a Headshot Photo.** Your profile will be easier to find, come up higher in searches and look more credible. The look you should aim for is “professional and approachable”. I generally advise against wedding photos, bikini photos and photos of you with a huge beer (unless you work for a beer company). Authentic is fine, unprofessional is not.

**Change the blue Background Photo.** Don't keep the automatic blue panel background. This shows people you are active at a glance and that you have invested time in your profile. Ensure the image is a 'landscape' photo as it is a long thin horizontal space. If you are in a role you might wish to choose an image related to your current organisation, or if you have spoken at a professional event you might want to use that, or something else relevant to your field of expertise.

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**Have a strong Headline** that accurately describes what you do. There are more interesting ways to do this than just using your job title. Use accurate words that people are likely to search on. If you are immediately available and actively looking for your next role you may wish to make this known, using something along the lines of 'HR Director – exploring new opportunities'.

**Include an engaging summary in the 'About' section.** This is a great space to give a brief overview of who you are, what you do and what is important to you. It is essentially your elevator pitch. You could also include bullet points of your specialist skills / areas of expertise.

**Write simply and concisely.** Imagine you are talking to someone at a networking event and telling them who you are and what you do. Speak in the first person. Avoid competencies. Also avoid using company specific jargon or acronyms in terms of job titles and how you describe your role. Keep it as accessible as possible so people have the best chance of finding you.

**Ensure your 'Work History' section is up to date and complete.** Make sure your dates accurately reflect when / if your previous jobs have ended, so it doesn't look like you have several roles concurrently.

**Add multi-media:** this could be presentations, videos, links to articles you have published. It brings your profile to life and showcases things you have done. These can be included at various points including within the role you did them, or in the newer 'Featured' section at the top.

**Ask for Recommendations** from relevant colleagues and clients. It is valuable when someone endorses your work, rather than relying on your own opinion. Ideally include people more senior than you.

**Don't copy and paste your CV onto your LinkedIn profile.** They should not be the same. Your LinkedIn profile should be succinct – an overview of who you are, what you do, and the value you add. It should also be slightly less formal.

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Ensure your contact details are included. Although good researchers and recruiters will always find good candidates, help them out.

Ensure you include relevant key words in your profile. This could be within your job titles, your 'About' summary, or within the detail of individual roles. This helps you come higher up in searches, much like with a Google search.

Complete the 'Skills & Endorsements' section. This will help you be found for the areas you want to be associated with. You can highlight up to three as your 'Top Skills'. This also helps with being discoverable.

Include any relevant Education and Qualifications. This is important to some employers. *Relevant* is the point to note here. If you have 20 years of work experience you don't need to list your dissertation title, unless particularly relevant to your field of work today.

Select additional sections for your profile as required. When you are in edit mode you can click and drag sections in and out and move the order of some. So for example if you speak a number of languages, drag that section in and populate it. If you don't, leave it out. Play around with it so it works for you and highlights things in a way you want to.



## TIP!: Get feedback

When you have drafted your LinkedIn Profile, ask for feedback from someone who knows you in a professional setting. People often forget some of the best things they have delivered. Also ask someone to proof-read it for you and flag any typos or errors you have missed.

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## 2. Using LinkedIn to keep in touch with existing connections

Well done, you now have a great looking LinkedIn Profile!

That is a good start but it is only the beginning. Many people get to this point and then stop and think that jobs or business will come to them. Occasionally if you are lucky they might. But normally that's not how it works. Think of it as a little bit like joining a gym. A great start but now you have to do the work.

**Step two is to USE LinkedIn, regularly.** There are a range of different ways to do this and it's about finding what works for you.

As a starting point **use the Private Message facility** to catch up with your existing connections, such as previous colleagues and industry contacts. Trusted former colleagues who know and rate you are an often underused pool of support when you are on the job market. Don't be afraid to drop people a line. Most of us would always be willing to help out a contact. Be clear about what you are looking for. Ensure when you catch up with people in your network you tell them simply what roles you are looking for, so they can keep you in mind if they see an advert or are contacted for referrals.

Please return the favour when you are settled in your next role. Networking should be two way, so look at how you can help them, not just what you need from them.

Private messages are a great starting point if you aren't a regular and confident user of LinkedIn because it isn't in the public domain.

As you get braver, you should **engage with your connections' content**. As you scroll through the newsfeed of posts from your connections, if you comment on something, your **Name and Headline** will be visible and seen by others. This is a great reminder of you and another reason to have an impactful headline. (Don't just "like" things, add a comment).

Then the next step is to **post your own content and to start conversations**. This could be by posting status updates and sharing quality content to your network such as sharing articles.

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You can use **Hashtags** on your posts to make them discoverable if someone searches on that word, or are following it. Generally, it is advised that three is about the optimum number for a LinkedIn post.



**TIP!:** Remember everything you post on the newsfeed is in the public domain so write accordingly.

Here is an example post:

The image shows a screenshot of a LinkedIn post by Ellie Rich-Poole, 'The Recruitment Coach'. The post includes a profile picture, name, and headline. The main text provides 'Covering letter tips' and a link to a blog. Three blue hashtags are listed below: #recruitment #covid19hiring #coverletter. An arrow points to these hashtags with the label 'Three hashtags'. Below the text is a photograph of a woman at a laptop, with an arrow pointing to it labeled 'Article with image'. The article title is 'Why I changed my mind about covering letters' from ellierichpoole.com. At the bottom, there are icons for Like, Comment, Share, and Send, and a view count of 3,816.

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## 3. Using LinkedIn to grow your connections and be discoverable

Now you have got a great profile, are regularly catching up with your existing contacts, and are sharing articles, starting conversations and actively engaging in discussions around interesting industry media.

The next step is to **make new connections** by being seen. Why is this important? Because if you want to be spotted for your dream role, the more people that see you, the better.

If you write a post and you have 500 connections, you could possibly be seen by those 500 connections (realistically it would be a lot less).

If one of them likes/comments on the post, you could be seen by your 500 connections, plus all of the connections of the person who liked/commented.

Imagine therefore if you had 2000 connections, and 20 of those people like/comment on your post. The increased possibility of being seen is immense. So the more (suitable) connections you have, the better. And the more engagement you get on your posts the better.

As you get to know your own market and specialism activity on LinkedIn the more you will see the types of content that people find valuable and engage with. This evolves all the time as the algorithm changes, but generally, original content with a photo does well. The more comments you get in the first hour the more it will be seen. LinkedIn favours people who start and continue conversations. It likes people to be social.

**Make sure people can connect with you.** Check your privacy settings to ensure people can send you an invitation to connect. A candidate I was once trying to head hunt (who turned out to be actively looking) had their privacy settings so high that no one could invite them to connect without knowing their e mail address.

**Proactively connect with others on LinkedIn**, including anyone you have worked with in the past that you didn't get round to connecting with; people in your phone book; people you are connected with on other platforms; people in the industry you have been interacting with; people you meet at networking events or on webinars.

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**ALWAYS personalise invitation requests**, explaining why you want to connect. This is easier on the desktop version of LinkedIn because it gives you a prompt. If you are on the app (including the iPad version), go to the person's profile, but don't hit 'connect' which immediately fires out a non-personalised invitation. Instead hit 'more' and select 'personalise invite' where you can add a note.

**Respond to people.** If someone comments on your post or sends a personal message, reply and keep the conversation going.

**Join suitable groups.** If you are looking for a role as an HR Director, ensure you are in the key HR leadership groups, and groups run by the HR search firms, or HR institutions, publications etc. If someone searches LinkedIn for 'HR Director' – the results are ordered:

1. Their 1<sup>st</sup> connections
2. People they are in groups with
3. Their 2<sup>nd</sup> connections
4. Their 3<sup>d</sup> connections.

Profiles without photos go right to the bottom.

So being in a group with a HR head-hunter is the next best thing to being connected to them.



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Use the 'Open to Work' facility to set up your criteria if you are looking for a new role. You can select whether you tell recruiters only, or the wider LinkedIn community. You can also opt to have the green badge on your profile photo which make it visible at a glance.



This [video](#) gives you more information.

Ensure you are being discreet if you are currently in a role and don't want everyone to see that you are exploring new opportunities.

Maintain a presence on LinkedIn at all times, not just when you are looking for a job. Networking shouldn't be an activity that you pick up when you need something from others. It should be ongoing and two way.

For more from The Recruitment Coach:

Connect with me on [LinkedIn](#) (please personalise the request!)

Join the Recruitment Coach [Facebook Group](#)

Follow me on [Instagram](#)

If you would like to book a one-to-one LinkedIn review session please e-mail me [ellie@ellierichpoole.com](mailto:ellie@ellierichpoole.com)

For information on all my coaching programmes visit my [invest page](#)