

Manu Goswami's Best Practices on LinkedIn

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Message from Manu

This is a best practices summary and is meant to provide direction on how you should use LinkedIn. These techniques have worked for me so I thought I'd share it. Feel free to let me know if you have things to add to it. Always open to feedback! Also, if you derive value from this, please follow me (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/swishgoswami/>) and Trufan (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/superfan-inc/>) on LinkedIn. It would mean the world to me because I really believe that if you're into personal branding or marketing, you'll love what we are doing at Trufan and what I post regularly on LinkedIn.

Content Creation

- 1. Informative content:**
 - Discussion questions (narrative followed with question that prompts audience to answer in the comments)
 - Share article with original commentary (include excerpt from the article or takeaways from it)
 - Share list of advice (ex. 5 ways to balance your work and personal life) and then ask the audience what another item of the list should be (ex. what should #6 be?)
 - Sharing your expertise in short form posts or videos (1-2 minutes, include subtitles, and keep it raw – not highly edited)
 - Share questions on topics you don't understand (ex. Can someone explain to me whether bitcoin is a bubble or not?) because it sparks good engagement in the comments.
- 2. Inspirational content:** not the "just do it" type stuff.
 - Feel good stories/videos (analyze Facebook or Instagram for viral videos/content and repurpose on LinkedIn – giving credit to original source)
 - Interviewing people you know and sharing their story in a short form post with a photo of them. Even if you don't know someone, share their inspiring quotes (ex. I love the wisdom Jay Shetty shares and I occasionally share quotes from him),
 - Share videos (ex. I exported a Jack Ma video from YouTube and shared it on LinkedIn)
 - Share their story (ex. talk about the Indian kid Google recently hired for a million dollars).
- 3. Personal anecdotes:** share your journey - both ups and downs (i.e. speaking at events, going through a professional hurdle, reflect on a time when you got fired, reflect on a time you did well in an interview).
 - Write it as if it's a story and make sure to format the post so it's easy to read and not just one big blob of text. This is the hardest type of content to create because you have to let your guard down, be 100% honest/vulnerable and share a story from your heart (both good and bad).
 - Try to focus on providing lessons near the end of the story – so people aren't just listening to your victories or failures but are actually taking something away from it (encourage them to comment their takeaway or if they've gone through something similar).
- 4. Articles:** not doing very well on LinkedIn recently but still important to add in (at least 10 on your profile – improves your profile's SEO).

- Try to keep your articles short, tag people in it and when sharing an article, make sure to paste it as a link but include a custom thumbnail because your thumbnail's picture in a post will be grainy.
 - Make articles your networking nexus – what I mean by that is if you want to network with people effectively, start an article series on LinkedIn and ask people you want to meet/do business with if you can interview them for it. 99% of people love talking about themselves. They're more likely to accept an interview request than a 15 min coffee request.
5. **Campaigns:** recent trend started by my friends and I on LinkedIn. I created the #letsgethonest campaign with three other people (Michaela Alexis, Josh Fechter, Aaron Orendorff) which got over 26M impressions overall (over 80 people contributed to it).
 - Set up a campaign around a social issue you are passionate about (mine was on workplace issues and being vulnerable to them).
 - Get 3-4 other people and set up a posting schedule where you start the chain off with a video/post and include the hashtag to symbolize/organize the campaign.
 - Then nominate 2-3 people (ideally your friends) and get them to post as well (and to tag 2-3 other people).
 6. **Updates:** when a new LinkedIn feature comes out (ex. in a few months, live video will come out), test it out, and then share a review on it to your audience and ask for their opinion on the update. Content about LinkedIn shared on LinkedIn indexes really well and gets the attention of the LinkedIn team that can artificially inflate your posts.

Profile

1. **Picture:** Make it professional and make sure your face can be seen in it. Ideally no one else should be in it. It doesn't have to be you in a suit, it could be you speaking at an event, or you with a prop that you want to make a part of your online brand (ex. coffee cup).
2. **Name:** Just use your name and don't include your occupation in it. You want to make your name easy for other people to find you and tag you in posts.
3. **Description below name:** Make it a summary of your accomplishments/occupation/unique branding characteristic (ex. Espresso Fueled Entrepreneur)
4. **Summary:** REALLY IMPORTANT. Please share your personal story in it and feel free to mention what you are working on right now and what you are on LinkedIn for (speaking, connecting with likeminded people, finding a job, etc). Put a way for people to contact you at the end of the summary. Include some media in the summary if you can (personal website, feature publications, videos, etc).
5. **Experience:** Fill out your experience, volunteer experience and education. Beneath each job include a document (example of work product if possible) and a summary of your responsibilities and what you took away from the experience.
6. **Featured skills & endorsements:** Pretty much useless. No need to concentrate on these – I keep getting endorsed for the random things and it makes no difference to your profile.
7. **Recommendations:** This actually makes a difference to your profile as it affects your profile's SEO (along with Honors/Awards and Publications). Try to get people you have worked with in the past or people you are currently working with to give you a short recommendation (make the recommendation tailored to an experience rather than you as a person only).
8. **Publications:** Stack up your publications not only in terms of articles you wrote but articles that you are featured in. If you are quoted or featured in an article, add it under publications and make sure to tag the author of the article under the section "co-author".

9. **Honors & Awards:** Fill this up as best you can. Under each honor and award, don't be afraid of stating how many people are given the award and how many applicants there were (if you know the number).
10. **Organizations/Projects/Languages/Certifications/Courses:** All useless but feel free to fill in if you want to complete your profile and get the all-star ranking from LinkedIn (feels good!).

Networking

1. Get LinkedIn Premium (super affordable now) or at least try it out for three months. Why? You have the ability to inMail when you get Premium. If someone is big on Instagram, you can find them on LinkedIn where they likely aren't as big. In an inMail, establish context off the bat on how you learnt about the person or what caught your attention about them/their content. Then go right into your brief 3-4 sentence story and if you want make an ask at the end. When making an ask, I find asking to interview people is the best method to getting their attention, providing upfront value and building a relationship. You don't just have to interview them, you can comment on their posts (comment smart/witty things), or share their posts.
2. Once you get LinkedIn Premium you'll be able to add people in a better way. Currently on basic accounts, you need to click My Network and scroll through suggested people you should connect with. That's not as efficient. Instead go to your profile, and click on the number of people who have viewed your profile in the last 90 days. When you have Premium you can see the people seeing your profile in real time – add those people (based on who you find interesting) as they already have context on your profile and are more likely to accept your request.
3. When it comes to accepting connection requests here's my rule of thumb: if someone wants to connect with you (and they're not creepy or post bad content) then accept them until you get to 10K connections. People have their reasons for wanting to connect with you and who knows what that might be until you accept their request (most users don't have LinkedIn premium... for some reason).

Time Management

Not much to say here – note that live video will be coming out soon and LinkedIn has tried to encourage people to do videos more than short form posts/articles (they are artificially inflating videos). So if you want to spend your time building content with a wider reach, aim to do 2-3 videos per week (maybe take your articles or short form posts and narrate them in video). Also use your commute times for LinkedIn and 30 minutes at the start/end of the day. You always have time to be able to post, comment back to people and even check your inbox periodically.

Collaboration

Much like any platform, the way to grow on LinkedIn is collaboration. There are several ways you can do this.

1. **Attend/host a LinkedIn meetup:** I started LinkedInLocal with four other people (Anna McAfee, Ryan Troll, Erik Eklund and Alexandra Galviz). It's in over 150 cities now and people from all walks of life are hosting meetups in their city. What it means to host a meetup is this: think of a theme for a three-hour event (normally between 6PM-9PM). Find one or two people to host the

event with, find a venue (low budget – ideally finesse a lower budget by promising exposure via LinkedIn), find speakers and post the event link on Eventbrite or Picatic. Spread the word on LinkedIn. If there's already a LinkedIn local in your city, no reason to compete with them. Attend their event, meet the organizer and express your desire to help them out and shape the future events. One cool thing I'm excited by is continental or global LinkedIn conferences (recently we had the inaugural LinkedIn Summit in LA with some of the biggest voices on the platform coming out to speak).

- 2. Interview campus editors:** You can find a list of the campus editors LinkedIn selects every year by searching up "LinkedIn Campus Editor Program" on Google. Interview those individuals because they have great stories and they are also well connected on the platform. Also any mention on them in posts tends to over index on the platform. PS. I'm a Campus Editor 😊
- 3. Collaborate on an article or video:** Just join forces with another person on LinkedIn and write an article together (each of you publishes the article) or do a video together and post the recording of it (if you use Skype, use the tool eCamm to record a side by side video of the conversation). In your videos, ask one to two questions and try to keep the videos to 2 mins maximum. Do one for one person to post and another video for the other person to post (maybe interviewing each other).
- 4. Compilation videos:** this is really cool if you have a group of friends on the platform. I did a Holiday Anthem for LinkedIn in December 2017 where I got 10 of my friends on the platform to sing a part of a Christmas carol and I compiled it together.

Strategies

- 1. Tag people and companies you mention in your posts (using @):** Make sure to not over-tag – if you're tagging more than 5 people, think hard on whether the post you're writing is relevant for them and whether you think they'll want to comment on it.
- 2. Collaboration groups:** Many people these days are starting groups where people can share strategies on the platform and can also share their posts to get some early engagement on it (likes/comments). I wouldn't rely on these groups but they're worth having especially on really important posts (ex. new job/company announcement).
- 3. Comment on other people's posts:** When making content, don't think it only comes by you clicking the post button. Many times, commenting on other people's posts can be a great way to get engagement and to get people noticing your profile especially if your comment is well thought out and isn't just an emoji. Dr. Natalia on LinkedIn does well on comments because her comments are always relevant to what the post is about and she sparks a conversation. Check them out under her profile – activity.
- 4. Targeting:** When you come on the platform, chances are you're not going to attract everyone's attention. Make sure you play to an audience early. For example, I made my content immediately relevant to college students (my early pieces of content were on finding your passion, procrastination, time management, finding internships, etc).
- 5. Consistency:** People want to follow people who won't just surface on LinkedIn once every four to five months. Once you start posting on LinkedIn, post consistently. It doesn't mean you post once a day or once every two days. Find what works for you but stick to it so people know you're here to stay and are more likely to connect with/follow you when they see the regular content you are sharing.
- 6. Put article links in the first comment:** When you're sharing an article, put the link in the first comment. This works for some people like Guy Kawasaki – play around with it and see if it works for you.

- 7. Join the Campus Editor program:** If you are a student (inflates your posts, you meet great people and you get LinkedIn Premium for free)

Community

This is the most important part of this document. At the end of the day, followers don't mean anything if you don't have an active and engaged community that not only resonates with your content but resonates with you. You won't have to worry about the algorithm changing if you focus on building community.

Cultivate community by engaging with your community (comment back to people when they comment, reply to people's messages in your inbox, comment on other people's posts, get on five minute calls with people who repetitively show up in your comments, interview people doing big things in your network). Also be resourceful (help people find jobs/internships and set up connections between people in your network). Consider running giveaways and give away product for very little in return.

For more info, watch my TEDx Talk on Storytelling on LinkedIn:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLiLouKxQdk>