

advancing women in business

every
woman
NETWORK



WORKBOOK

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ONLINE PROFILE

CONTENTS



About this workbook	3
The importance of social media for professionals	4
Section 1. Creating your online profile	13
Your digital footprint	13
Get the basics right	17
Inject your personal brand into your online profile	22
Growing your network using your personal brand	15
Section 2. Elevating your online profile	29
Share your unique point of view	31
Engage and exchange	32
Become a thought leader	34
Your personal action plan	37
everywoman Experts	38
Further Reading	39
Endnotes	40

About this workbook

ESTABLISHED IN 1999, everywoman advances women in business. Our aim is to ensure women from all over the world fulfill their potential. We produce workbooks on topics that matter most to our members, and we're constantly listening to your views to give you the tools you need to kick-start your career, at a time and place that suits you.

In our 2014 annual survey we polled our members to find out which topics have the most relevancy to their continued career growth. 'Making the most of your online profile' was a popular request. Many of you will be embarking on this workbook in order to make your social media profiles stand out from the crowd, attract more attention from opportunity-makers and expand your professional network. Or you might have already worked hard to get your social media profiles in tiptop shape, and are looking to take your digital presence to the next level, perhaps even becoming a thought leader within your industry.

Though the sheer vastness of the digital community may make such goals daunting to newcomers (LinkedIn is used by 300 million professionals, 6,000 Tweets are sent every second of every day,ⁱⁱ and 1.39 billion adults worldwide are active on Facebook every month - with 890 million logging in dailyⁱⁱⁱ), they are entirely achievable. Forbes magazine described LinkedIn as "a sledgehammer that will help tear down the glass ceiling once and for all" due to its "gender agnostic" search and connecting strategies which mean women can communicate directly with senior leaders, "pursuing opportunities they would not obtain directly from the people they know".^{iv}

This workbook is designed to get you thinking about your current digital footprint (the trail of data you've left behind online), and how you can maximise the assets created in that space – everything from your Twitter bio to your LinkedIn headshot) – to ensure that you're optimised for opportunities and career development.

social media platform in existence and how you can make best use of it; there are plenty of social media branding gurus who blog on this subject (we've listed a few in the 'Further reading' section). Instead we're going to draw on wider everywomanNetwork topics like authenticity, personal brand and powerful communication, and guide you through the process of applying their principles to your online self. Along the way, we will give you hints and tips for boosting and managing your social media activity, in a way that doesn't apply even more pressure to your to-do list.

While we're going to assume you're on LinkedIn (the statistics uncovered throughout this workbook are compelling, so if you're not up and running, do so before going any further – it'll only take a few minutes), we're not going to tell you to set yourself up on every platform. Though if you want to cast a wider net, the infographic in the Appendix will give you an indication of which are best for your needs.

To satisfy as many individual preferences as possible, we've divided this workbook into two parts. Part one focuses on getting your messaging right and applying your personal brand to your digital portfolio, after first ensuring that the basics are in place. In part two you'll look at how you could take your digital presence to the next, executive level.

Please note that this workbook is designed for professional individuals who want to represent themselves online, rather than their own small businesses. It's about you and what makes you a unique proposition for a potential colleague, customer, connection, associate, hirer, employee, boss, bank manager, business partner – or anyone whose opinion about you matters.

Good luck - let us know how you get on:
contact@everywoman.com

The everywoman team

What this workbook isn't, is a guide to every

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PROFESSIONALS



The importance of social media for professionals

SINCE YOU'RE READING this workbook, it's unlikely that you need any convincing that in terms of your professional development, you can't afford to not have an online presence. However, if you're still in two minds about the value of a solid digital footprint, consider the following:

<p>64% of employers view a candidate's professional social network profiles before hiring.</p> <p><i>Robert Walters whitepaper</i></p>	<p>Recruitment executives admit that when they receive a candidate recommendation, they look at their LinkedIn profile first, to check it's worth picking up the phone to them.</p> <p><i>Forbes, Avoid LinkedIn at your peril</i></p>
<p>"If we're staffing for a recruiting, sales, marketing or business development role, it's a big red flag if a candidate has either no profile or a limited profile with a low number of connections."</p> <p><i>Laura Lashbrook Colby, Division Director, staffing agency Beacon Hill Associates.</i></p>	<p>40% of executives believe that companies have the right to deny a job offer based on the applicant's online identity.</p> <p><i>Livecareer.com</i></p>
<p>80% of job seekers use social media to prepare for an interview (including looking up the hiring manager or prospective boss on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn).</p> <p><i>Robert Walters whitepaper</i></p>	<p>"For any job that has an interpersonal component or is client-facing, a LinkedIn profile is a must."</p> <p><i>Michelle Kedem</i></p>

It's worth highlighting the fact that, just as in the physical world, you won't cultivate a strong offline network if you only dip into it when you want something – advice, favours, a new job. Similarly, you won't earn a reputation as an engaged, thought-provoking, sharing member of LinkedIn (or any other social network, blogging tool or forum) if you only log in to change your status to 'seeking new employment'. LinkedIn is there not so that you can find a job, but so that you "can maintain your solid network - so if you ever are in a position where you need to look for a job, you are well-connected and optimised," says Peg Fitzpatrick, author of *The Art Of Social Media*.

Maintaining a strong professional online identity isn't all about the end game. Finding new opportunities is a huge benefit afforded by LinkedIn, but if that were all it was, there'd be a marked absence of hyper-connected and much sought-after senior executives making their digital presences felt – something that simply isn't true.

So if the swarms of CEOs sharing every aspect of their professional lives on Twitter aren't there to find their next career move, what's in it for them? The question has been posed everywhere from Forbes to the Harvard Business Review, and in studies commissioned by technology giant IBM and global PR firm Weber Shandwick, sparking a debate which has given rise to the term 'The Social CEO'. Discover below a snapshot of the debate, its findings and its contributors.

"41% of millionaires use LinkedIn."

"I would rather engage in a Twitter conversation with a single customer than see our company attempt to attract the attention of millions in a coveted Superbowl commercial."

Peter Aceto, CEO, Canadian bank Tangerine

Marissa Mayer is one of the few execs to have a verified Twitter account. On the day she jumped ship from Google to take the top job at Yahoo!, she also informed her following (approaching one million) that she was pregnant with her first child.

30% of Fortune 500 CEOs [In the US] have a presence on social - a figure IBM predict will grow to 57% in the next five years: "CEOs recognise that using email and phone to get the message out isn't sufficient any more."

Domo/IBM/HBR

"Companies that are truly social and engage their employees and customers in genuine conversation will be recognised as the new corporate leaders: CEOs who are social will be the next new thing."

*Leslie Gaines-Ross,
Chief Reputation Strategist, Weber Shandwick*

40% of executives check their social media many times per day.

SocialCast

92% of senior executives are on LinkedIn. 51% are on Facebook and 5% are blogging regularly.

SocialCast

"Given a choice between similarly strong CEO candidates - one with an impressive social presence, the other without - the choice is easy: boards increasingly prefer the modern leader."

Harvard Business Review

Experts predict a 50% rise in UK CEOs who'll participate in social media over the next five years.

Weber Shandwick

Ten female executives to follow on Twitter

WHO	TWITTER HANDLE	WHAT THEY'RE TWEETING ABOUT
Marissa Mayer, CEO, Yahoo!	@marissamayer	All things Silicon Valley, leadership and goings on at Yahoo!
Angela Ahrendts, Senior Vice President, Apple Retail	@AngelaAhrendts	Women's career progression, events she attends, things that inspire her.
Michelle Rhee, Founder, StudentsFirst	@MichelleRhee	Education, politics, changing the world
Andrea Kerzner, Founder & CEO, Lalela Project	@AndreaKerzner	Global leadership, importance of education for all.
Christine Perrett, Founder & CEO, SeeDepth Inc	@missusP	Female empowerment, navigating a career, the start-up scene.
Wendy Lea, CEO, Cintrifuse	@WendySLea	Gender equality, encouraging women into business and through their careers, links to content she's passionate about.
Genevieve Bell, Vice President & Fellow, Intel	@feraldata	Anthropology, current affairs, books and travel.
Arianna Huffington, Founder & Editor-In-Chief, Huffington Post	@ariannahuff	How to thrive in life and business.
Zainab Salbi, CEO, Women For Women International	@ZainabSalbi	Feminist icons, global current affairs.

And of course, don't forget to follow everywoman on Twitter, @everywomanUK, for up-to-the minute career advice.

In today's hyper-connected digital world, your digital personality is as important a reputation marker as your offline self. It's easy to see why customers expect transparency and openness from the leaders whose business they purchase goods and services from. But a report by Weber Shandwick demonstrates that employees also want their CEOs to be well connected.

PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES WHO DESCRIBE THEIR ORGANISATION'S CEO AS...	THOSE WITH A SOCIALLY ENGAGED CEO	THOSE WHOSE CEO IS NOT SOCIALLY ENGAGED
Foward-looking	61%	58%
Effective	50%	48%
A good communicator	55%	38%
Open and accessible	48%	37%
In-touch	37%	31%
A good listener	37%	29%
Inspiring	43%	26%
Technologically savvy	35%	27%

It's worth emphasising that those CEOs who partake in social media - whether or not their employees followed them on Twitter or another platform, or even knew about their online activities - were perceived as both better communicators and more inspiring by a margin of 17%.

Top 5 reasons why executives visit online networks

- ✓ Great way to keep track of peers and colleagues
- ✓ Easy access to thought leadership or information that can't be found elsewhere
- ✓ Good way to showcase themselves or their companies
- ✓ Easy access to learning and professional development
- ✓ They wish to find out what others think of products, vendors or approaches

How executives are using social media (SOCIALCAST: 2010)

Why does it matter for you that CEOs are rapidly becoming more engaged with their online profiles? Well, for the purposes of this workbook, it demonstrates that crafting a perfect LinkedIn profile, engaging with Twitter communities or blogging about your every industry move, has consequences far more wide-ranging than simply gaining control over your next career move. It's about building a reputation for the long-term.

If you're aspiring towards a leadership role, consider how much easier it will be, on arrival at the board room, to elevate your social media presence to that of an executive's, if you already have a long history of well-executed profiles and engagement with the community you've built up? Marissa Mayer didn't open a Twitter account when she bagged the top job at Yahoo! in 2012; in fact, by her appointment, she'd been Tweeting on all things Silicon Valley for four years.

So what can you learn from the CEOs who've perfected social media, attracting hundreds of thousands of followers who hang off their every word? As you'd expect, successfully social CEOs have been much analysed, and while there's no paint-by-numbers approach to building an online brand, there are key qualities which bind them together and can be adopted by you, whatever stage of your career you're currently in.

"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently."

WARREN BUFFET, US
BUSINESSMAN

The 7 attributes of CEOs who understand social media

1. They have an insatiable curiosity

Many CEOs are drawn to Twitter to listen. They are curious what people are saying about their brand and drawn to real-time market intelligence.

2. They have a DIY mind-set

They don't want to see a typed-up report on customer experience; they want to get involved with the conversation with the customers directly.

3. They have a bias for action

The 24/7/365 social world waits for no focus group or budget cycle. It's happening now, and social CEOs strike while the iron's hot.

4. They are relentless givers

They don't just talk about their brands; they share, mentor, question and engage in social activity which benefits their following more than it does their organisations - posting useful, engaging or entertaining content with no sales message attached.

5. They connect instead of promote

Social CEOs don't use social media like a megaphone, popping by to shout loudly about their latest figures, advertising campaigns or launches.

6. They're the company's brand ambassador

By being authentic, they improve their organisation's brand. Two thirds of customers say their perception of a CEO impacts their perception of a company.

7. They lead with an OPEN mind-set

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Network. The social CEO realises nobody is the expert in everything; everyone is an expert at something.

Adapted from Ted Coiné and Mark Babbitt, authors of A World Gone Social, writing in Harvard Business Review (December 2014)

Consider if you are already demonstrating any of these characteristics in the physical world – how could you translate these skills into the digital world?

CHARACTERISTICS	IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD	IN THE DIGITAL WORLD
Are you curious about what others have to say and what's going on?	Asking questions of your colleagues and at networking events; bringing others into your conversations.	Reading and commenting on/ debating with others' posts and shared links.
Do you share useful information as well as expect it of others?	Letting friends and colleagues know about articles, books or events you know they'll be interested in.	Sharing posts with relevant subsets of your community which you know they'll enjoy. "I saw this and thought of you."
Are you interested in getting to know people?	Ensuring conversations are two-way; listening.	Engaging with what others have to say as well as broadcasting your own news and opinions - it's called 'social' media for a reason: don't forget to have two-way conversations.
Do you embody the very best values of your organisation and take any opportunity to demonstrate these?	Being a role model to your teams and colleagues; championing your organisation's work and causes outside the office.	Sharing public information via links that showcase the very best of your organisation. Demonstrating your passion for your industry through your views and the content you respond to.
Do you reach out to others when you need insight, information, feedback or advice? Are you open to others reaching out to you?	Picking up the phone to ask for advice, turning to a colleague who's a specialist in a particular topic.	Going to members of your online community and asking for help and advice; being open to others approaching you

If you're inexperienced in the digital space, consider how you may be demonstrating these traits in the physical world. And if you can't think of tangible examples of how you're demonstrating these in the office, think about how you could begin to cultivate these behaviours before transferring them online.

SECTION 1. CREATING YOUR ONLINE PROFILE



Creating your online profile

IN THIS SECTION you're going to do an analysis of your current digital footprint. We'll look at some of the basics that need to be in place before you can begin to build credibility around your online profile, and, finally, take a deep dive into your personal brand, and how you can inject your personality into everything you do online. When opportunities come along, you will stand head and shoulders above the crowd.

Your digital footprint

What do we mean by online profile? Well, it's not just your LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter page; we mean your digital footprint – the entire set of data that's available to someone searching for you. So much more than your social media profiles; it can include (but is by no means limited to):

- Comments that you've written on news stories
- Product or service reviews you've left on shopping, review or comparison websites;
- Pictures you've uploaded to competitions or news websites;
- Questions you've asked, advice you've given or discussions you've been involved in on forums, or question and answer websites like Quora;
- Charity or voluntary work (e.g. Justgiving.com page, pictures, news stories and press releases on charities' websites);
- Dates of, photos from or information about major personal events in your life (such as on a wedding photographer's online portfolio or the website of the venue of a special birthday party).

Exercise

Take a view of your own digital footprint: Google yourself and analyse the results. Try variations of your search, for example:

Your name, location

Your name, company name (current and previous) Your name, job title (current and previous)

Your name, industry type

Your name, education institution

Your name, email address

Email address

1. Consider the first impression to a searcher who doesn't know you or has limited knowledge of you. Are there any issues?
2. Consider the order of results. Is your LinkedIn profile appearing on results page three because personal elements are getting more attention? What impact might that have on your professional life?
3. Click each of the results, again considering the first impressions that might be made about you by someone arriving on those pages. Log out of any of the websites you visit via those links to ensure you're seeing what a visitor would be seeing. Do you need to make any privacy setting adjustments to any of the social website results? [Once you've done this, put a recurrent date in your diary to repeat this exercise every three months – privacy settings are notoriously fickle and when algorithms are tweaked, they are known to reset, making all your 'private' information public, often without your knowledge.]
4. Consider if there are any historical results you have the power to remove – old Tweets which don't portray you at your best, irrelevant product reviews, or archived blog entries – in order to elevate up the search results those that are more relevant to you today?
5. Don't forget to check not only the main Google 'web' results but also the other categories of search results, e.g. images, videos and news.
6. Are you nowhere to be found? Whether that's because you've a commonly occurring name or you simply haven't yet built a digital presence, the rest of the workbook will provide plenty of tips and techniques you can draw on in order to achieve more visibility.
7. In the space below, capture any observations you've identified from the above exercises and resulting actions to put on your to-do list.

MY DIGITAL FOOTPRINT ANALYSIS	
OBSERVATIONS	ACTION POINTS

Tip

In order to make sure the most relevant results are at the top of a search engine, it might be a good idea to buy your own personalised website address. Search for different URL variations of your name until you hit on one that isn't in use and is available to purchase. If the cost is reasonable, consider taking it on. You can make this domain link to your LinkedIn profile, or any other website or blog that you've built up.

This action will likely ensure you're much more visible for anyone searching for your name. Great combinations might be:

www.firstnamesurname.com

(Or other top level domains like .co.uk, .ca, .de, .it)

www.firstname-surname.com

www.firstname-surname-nameofprofession.com

www.firstname-surname-nameofindustry.com

It's also possible to customise your own LinkedIn address, so that rather than distributing a generic URL (website address) you can send one containing your name. Navigate to your profile, click the 'edit' symbol at the bottom of the first grey box with your key information (it looks like a pencil), and on the next page you will see a box inviting you to create your own, unique LinkedIn URL address, which can be added to signatures, CVs, Twitter profiles and business cards.

If you discover, upon Googling yourself, that you have competing namesakes, it's time to start building your online profile so that you're prominent and have enough differentiators related to your name that anyone searching would be able to find you accurately. Mistaken identities can have catastrophic impacts on careers.

Consider the case of Renee Adams, who, having no online profile of her own, found herself at the mercy of due diligence checks gone wrong.

Having been offered the role of office manager for a construction company, she learned – the day before starting her new job – that it had been given to someone else. The HR person tasked with checking up, had Googled her name and location, and, due to Renee's

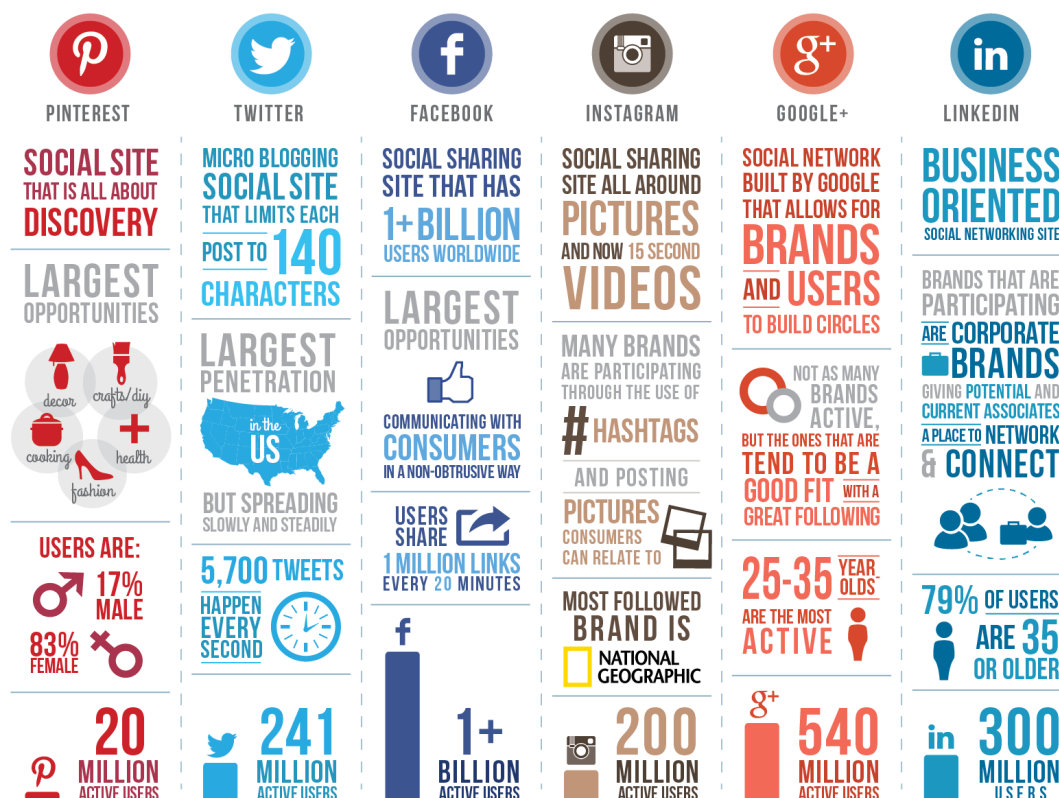
70% of employers have chosen not to hire a person based on what they've found about them online. Yet only 27% of employers give job seekers the opportunity to discuss the online content associated with their name.

SOURCE: EXECUNET

own lack of online came across another lady with the same name, who, despite having a different age and appearance, was taken for the candidate. This was unfortunate as this Renee Adams had a long history of fraud and forgery. You might argue that the HR person should have done better checks, but in this instance the sorry scenario could have been avoided if the checker had come across two Renee Adamses and had the wherewithal to check which was the right one.

Tip: If you're concerned about your Facebook privacy and what elements of your timeline are publically viewable, use a tool like Secure.Me, which alerts you to potential issues.

Get the basics right



Social media comparisons (Leveragenewagemedia.com: 2014)

As you can see from the above infographic, each of the main social networks has a niche. While LinkedIn is the dominant network for professionals (and the one we'll discuss in most detail throughout this workbook), virtually all of them can be used in some professional capacity.

NETWORK	MAIN PURPOSE	HOW PROFESSIONALS CAN MAKE THE MOST OF IT	THE BIGGEST DON'T
Pinterest	Finding inspiring images.	Creating mood boards to inspire projects; connecting with others doing similar work.	Don't forget to connect. It can be easy to use Pinterest as a source of great imagery but it's still a network and connecting is the goal.
Twitter	Sharing ideas in 140 characters or less.	Commenting on trends, showcasing achievements, micro blogging on industry events.	Don't simply broadcast - engage with others.
Facebook	Sharing information and pictures with friends and family.	Personal groups for subset networks interested in specific topics, e.g. workshop attendees.	Don't forget to review privacy settings frequently and to ensure you're not posting anything (profile picture include) of anything you'd hate a colleague or boss to see down the line.
Instagram	Sharing your own original images.	Sharing images from industry events; showcasing another side of your personality to your cross-network community (e.g. your love of swimming or antiques).	As with Pinterest, Instagram is as much about connecting as it is broadcasting. Engage, engage, engage.
Google+	Creating 'circles' in order to organise your connections by interest groups/passions.	Google controls search rankings, so it stands to reason that a professional page in your name will be beneficial to your visibility.	As with Facebook, keep your profile picture clean if you want to avoid embarrassing repercussions.
LinkedIn	Networking with professionals.	Expanding networks, job hunting, learning from other professionals and sharing your own achievements.	Don't go for quantity over quality. The number of connections you have is meaningless if they serve no purpose.

YOU'RE GOING TO start by taking a look at your current LinkedIn profile, since this is where most professional online activity occurs. Many of the best practices on this platform apply equally to others like Twitter and Pinterest.

Open your profile in a separate browser or have it open on your phone or desktop if you're working from the PDF version of this workbook.

Now take an objective view of your profile and what it says about you at this time.

Catherine Fisher, Senior Director Corporate Communications at LinkedIn, and the San Francisco office's resident expert on all things profile and personal brand, says: "A robust LinkedIn profile can be your ticket to a variety of professional opportunities. Think of your profile as a visual representation of your professional brand. The more information you share on your profile, the more tailored your experience will be - from the jobs that you see listed, to the people you may know, to the news that's shown in your feed."

"Think of your profile as a visual representation of your professional brand."

CATHERINE FISHER, SENIOR
DIRECTOR, CORPORATE
COMMUNICATIONS, LINKEDIN

Exercise:

Consider some of the following stats in relation to the view you've just taken of your own profile, and note down any action points that you can add to your to-do list to get your profile working harder for you.

FACTS FROM LINKEDIN'S COMMUNICATIONS TEAM		ACTION POINTS
PROFILES WITH...	RECEIVE THIS MANY MORE VIEWS...	
A specified industry	15 x	
More than one position listed	12 x	
A photo	15 x	
Details of education	10 x (contacted 14 x more)	
A location	5 x	
A summary*	7 x	

*Whether or not you already have a summary, you're going to take a closer look at creating one. In this exercise you'll get the basics in place, which mean that what you do is clearer and more explicit to anyone arriving on your profile. In a later section, you'll look at how you can bring these to life so that as well as being stamped with your credentials, it also sings your personal brand.

Exercise

Create your own keywords.

For each of the questions below, jot down the keywords that will act as the signposts for the reader to get them to quickly understand who you are and what you do.

The example answers on the right are what an everywomanNetwork member in her second role as a marketing manager at a global PR firm in the travel sector might answer.

"Creating a bio or profile is one of the hardest, yet most important, things that you need to do for your social media presence. And it isn't something you can do once and never think about again."

PEG FITZPATRICK, AUTHOR &
SOCIAL MEDIA BLOGGER

1. If you were on the hunt for someone with exactly your type of role, what words might you use in your search?

1. _____ e.g. *Marketing manager*
2. _____ e.g. *Global travel PR*
3. _____ e.g. *Travel marketing specialist*

2. How would you describe your level of experience? It may help to think about how your experience differs to that of a boss and/or subordinate.

1. _____ e.g. *First time people manager*
2. _____ e.g. *Deputy to lead project manager*
3. _____ e.g. *Five years experience in travel sector*

What three achievements do you want to jump out at someone scanning your summary?

1. _____ e.g. *Promoted after just one year as junior*
2. _____ e.g. *First solo campaign launched ahead of time and under budget*
3. _____ e.g. *Nominated for employee of month three times (won twice)*

Highlight the most important keywords. As well as using them for the framework of your LinkedIn summary, you can sprinkle the most important into your Twitter bio. Professionals search Twitter using hashtags or phrases around interest groups. If a particular technology niche is the main thing you want to highlight, search Twitter for the most relevant keyword (e.g. #womenintech, #stem, #technology, and include it, hashtag and all, in your bio).

Inject your personal brand into your online profile

“PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD,” says Chris Forman, CEO of the online job-search organiser Startwire in Forbes’ *How An Online Reputation Can Hurt Your Job Hunt*.

“Questionable content and social media red flags can take a promising candidate out of the running, but the savvy job seeker... can use social media profiles to demonstrate your strengths and signal to employers that you are the best candidate for the job.”

We’ve discussed the importance of a summary. LinkedIn suggests that this be a minimum of 40 words, but it can roll into several paragraphs if you genuinely have enough compelling content or a story to tell.

In the last section you identified which searchable keywords will indicate to a searcher the ‘what’ of your career. Now you are going to look more closely at the ‘who’. But first a word of caution:

“If you’re motivated about your career, passionate about doing your best work, and are highly creative, then I’ve got news for you,” says LinkedIn’s Catherine Fisher: “So is everyone else.” LinkedIn’s annual summary of the most overused words in summary profiles reveals the top ten culprits.

TOP 10 GLOBAL BUZZWORDS USED IN LINKEDIN SUMMARIES	
1. Motivated	6. Responsible
2. Responsible	7. Strategic
3. Creative	8. Track record
4. Driven	9. Organisational
5. Extensive experience	10. Expert

We’re now going to counteract what amounts to a boring list of buzzwords, using the age-old ‘show don’t tell’ mantra of storytelling.

Exercise:

What are the five adjectives that best describe who you are at work? You might well consider yourself strategic, motivated and all of the buzzwords on the previous page, or you might have a different set altogether. List them here, and if you're struggling to limit to five, consider which ones you can more quickly and easily come up with concrete examples which demonstrate why you embody that trait.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Now, summarise in a concise sentence an activity you undertook which encapsulates each adjective. Before you do, take some inspiration below from everywoman Associate personal branding expert Jennifer Holloway^{vii}.

BUZZWORD BINGO...	THE COMPELLING REAL-LIFE STORY...
"I'm responsible for overseeing a budget of £1million."	"With a budget of £1 million to oversee, I've been responsible for reducing overall spend by 10% year- on-year."
"I'm driven."	"My willingness to take on the jobs others avoid is driven by a love of solving complex problems."
"I love being creative."	"I apply the same skill for writing engaging copy as I do to penning pantomimes for my local amateur dramatics society."

MY BUZZWORDS...	MY COMPELLING REAL-LIFE STORY...
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Jennifer Holloway recalls in her blog that a colleague once won a job over a similarly qualified candidate simply because the hiring manager found it amusing that her LinkedIn profile mentioned her obsession with Yorkshire puddings. “I’m not saying that what makes Karen unique is that she’s the only marketer in the world who likes Yorkshire puddings [simply that] she’s the only one who applied for the job who said [so].”

She also reveals that she once gained a new client who told her: “I read in your biography that you’re a fan of The Archers [UK radio show] – and that was good enough for me!”

A common sense approach must prevail. If you’re in the type of role or industry where a few authentic yet trivial giveaways about yourself will not be perceived as professional, it might make more sense to allude to a cause you care deeply about, a charity you volunteer at, or the main club or hobby that takes up your time outside work.

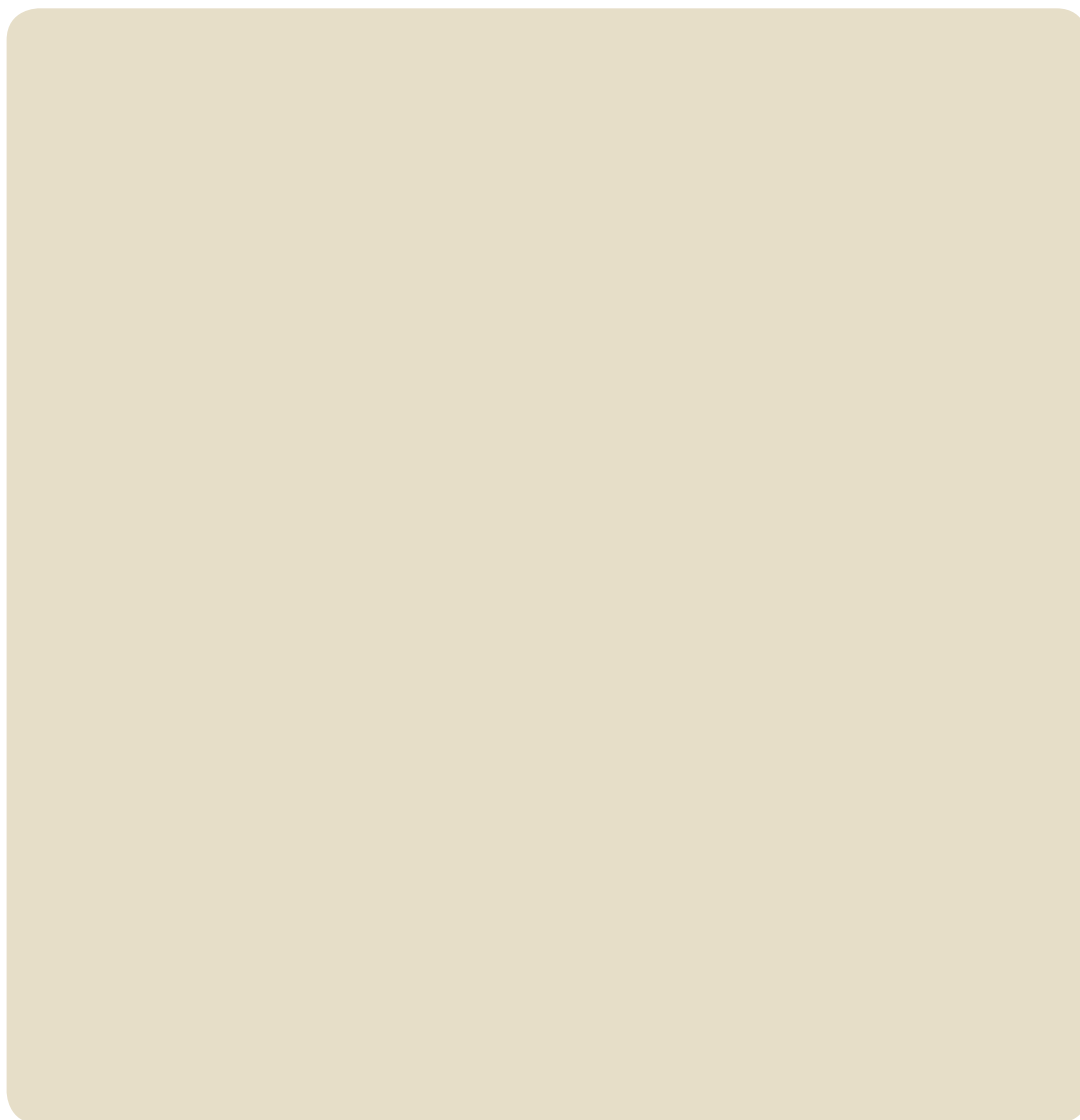
“When in doubt - leave it out.”

ENGLISH PROVERB

Exercise:

Write your LinkedIn summary. Look back over your factual keywords, your stories and any additional personal insights you came up with on the pages before. Spend some time crafting these into a summary of 40 words minimum. Once you're happy with it, put it away for 24 hours before coming back to it and making any tweaks and cuts. Read it out loud and ask yourself honestly if it's an authentic fit with your true voice. Show it to a trusted friend, colleague or associate for feedback before uploading it to your profile.

Take your 'active member' credentials one step further by politely inviting your connections to read and feedback, editing as you see fit. Keep an eye on your analytics (linked to from your LinkedIn log in page) over the coming weeks to see what impact your summary has on profile views. This isn't as scary as it sounds; it's merely a one page snapshot detailing how many people have viewed you, and where you sit in profile view rankings according to your community, your organisation and others with the same job title as you.



Exercise:

Put a recurring note in your diary to remind yourself to check back over your summary (and any other profiles you may have, including your Twitter bio) on a quarterly basis, adding any more up to date material or removing anything no longer relevant.

Stimulus: If you're really struggling to write your own summary, it's worth taking a look at some profiles of colleagues you admire, or even strangers who do a similar job in a similar industry. Beware of the temptation to 'borrow', however, and don't get disheartened if your peers' profiles seem to elevate them higher than you – you're viewing their 'highlights reel' and it's your task now to work on your own. Below are snapshots of the LinkedIn summaries of some of the experts who've been mentioned far in this workbook.

As you read through, consider the picture you're building up of each individual – inviting lesser-known members of your network to feedback on your own summary can be a smart view of working out how your words are really landing.

"The reason we struggle with insecurity is we compare our behind the scenes with everyone else's highlight reel. Realise you are seeing the best of everyone else and evaluating that against the worst of yourself."

CARRIE KERPEN, CEO
LIKABLE MEDIA

Jennifer Holloway, Founder, Spark Branding:

When it comes to personal branding I've been there, got the T-shirt. From my corporate days running press offices to being the boss of my own business I've built relationships, gained clients and stayed on people's radars by promoting who I am - not just what I do. Now, as the author of *Personal Branding For Brits*, I've condensed my experience into a practical guide to help others discover being successful means being yourself. (Even if that's admitting you're a fan of *The Archers* like I am!)

Catherine Fisher, Senior Director Corporate Communications, LinkedIn:

Working at LinkedIn I get to spend my days doing what I enjoy most, coming up with creative campaigns that tell the LinkedIn story. One of the highlights of my career at LinkedIn was working on a campaign called, *Bring In Your Parents*. It was an idea we hatched up on the communications team because we all shared a similar experience in that our parents really had no clue what we do. So we set out to educate parents across the globe - and it worked. There is nothing more rewarding than coming up with an idea, having almost every major national outlet talk about it, and more importantly seeing the impact it made on employees.

Peg Fitzpatrick, author of *The Art Of Social Media*

Social media is my passion and my job. I'm here sharing my professional experience working day to day in the trenches of social media, marketing, and blogging. I work with global brands and leaders in the social media sphere. I've spearheaded successful campaigns for Motorola, Audi, Google, and Virgin. I work with the best brands and make them even better! I'll share tips and tricks, provide positive inspiration and answer social media questions through the content that I create and curate.

Summary complete, you're now going to write your own headline – this is the short, snappy title you see beneath your name on your profile page (most users simply repeat their job title). If the summary is your elevator pitch, your headline is what you'd shout through the gap in the lift's closing doors. Look back over any previous elements to see if any notes you made spark off a headline idea, and look over the examples below to get the gist of the possibilities to make a great first impression in just a few words:

e.g. Peg Fitzpatrick

Author, Social media strategist, and Pinterest expert

My headline:

Five great uses of social media you can learn from

1. When Goldman Sachs first joined Twitter in 2012, they sent out a Tweet minus the link it was supposed to relate to. When a follower picked them up on it, they could have deleted the original and reposted, created another Tweet or just ignored the mistake and their follower. Instead they thanked the follower for alerting them to the error, and in doing so demonstrated the sort of humility not usually associated with giant financial corporations. The lesson? Humility and self- deprecation will take you far.



2. Sporting executive Karren Brady is known for her directness, humour and feminist stance. All three traits came together beautifully in her much-ReTweeted two word commentary on a product designed by one of the candidates she was judging on a reality TV show. The lesson? Where social media is concerned, sometimes less is more.



3. Kanye West was lambasted for interrupting Taylor Swift mid-acceptance speech at a 2010 awards show. Known for his verbosity and convoluted monologues, his apology came across as all the more sincere for cutting to the chase. The lesson? Sometimes you have to say it like it is.



@kanyewest
Kanye West

I'm sorry Taylor.

4 Sep 10 via web ☆ Favorite ↺ Retweet ↻ Reply

4. Bragging will always go hand in hand with social media, but the following Tweet demonstrates that there is a way to shout about your achievements with humour and excitement, rather than arrogance. The lesson? Cheer yourself on rather than tell everyone how great you are.



5. While Michael Dell's Tweet is barely a humble-brag, it still – thanks to the simplicity of the final message – manages to convey the sense that what he really wants to do with this knowledge is inspire others. The lesson? Share with others what can really enable them.



Growing your network with your personal brand

LINKEDIN IS ALL about connecting and growing your personal networks. Don't forget that your personal brand isn't isolated to your summary and headline - you need to ensure that your messaging is authentic and consistent when you're reaching out to others too.

When you next send an invitation, apply these five tips to make it personal:

1. Include a salutation, preferably one that's chatty and matches your personal brand.
2. Explain where you got their name from (if you don't already know them), e.g. "I saw you give a presentation at the Tech Conference last week".
3. Explain why you're getting in touch, e.g. "I've checked out your profile and notice we work with the same group of people".
4. Suggest a further action - usually a way for you to build the relationship further and make it more valuable for both of you, e.g. "I'm in your neck of the woods next Thursday and wondered if you're free for a quick coffee".
5. Include some insight into your personal brand subtly giving clues to what makes you tick, e.g. "I get a buzz out of connecting people so if you're coming to the next Tech Conference and would like to meet my CEO, just let me know".

From Jennifer Holloway: LinkedIn Invitations: Make It Personal^{viii}

If you're asking someone to recommend you, be as specific as possible in your request – recommendations are more meaningful (and easier to write), if they're related to a particular project or result.

Before wrapping up part one, consider if there are any elements of what you've learned about bolstering your LinkedIn profile that can be applied to any other corners of the Internet you're active on – your Twitter bio, Pinterest, Quora or Instagram profile, your infographic CV (a visual representation of your resume you can build for free via various applications), your organisation's intranet directory, or anything else.

You may not consider yourself a 'digital person' and be tempted to stop right there, content with an online profile which ticks all the best practice boxes. Before you decide, we encourage you to look through the following section - it might well inspire you to continue driving your online profile onwards and upwards.

SECTION 2. ELEVATING YOUR ONLINE PROFILE



Elevating your online profile

“REMEMBER THAT ALTHOUGH LinkedIn is a place for professionals to connect and look for jobs, it’s also the place for you to build your professional brand. Ask yourself, what do I want my future boss, my clients, my business network to know about me as a professional?” says Catherine Fisher.

There are three key ways that you can elevate your status beyond that of someone who’s crafted a well-written, on-brand, keyword-rich profile:

1. Share your unique point of view;
2. Engage and exchange;
3. Position yourself as a thought leader – whatever age or career stage you find yourself at, from intern right through to CEO.

Share your unique point of view

“**SUCCESS FAVOURS THE BOLD** as well as the interesting on social media,” says social media expert and blogger Peg Fitzpatrick. “Don’t hesitate to express your feelings and agenda.”

You may have a very strong opinion about almost everything that’s going on in your industry – from pain points to new trends, or you may have a particular niche area of interest. Either way, one of the simplest ways there is to showcase yourself, your beliefs and values, is to demonstrate your own, clear and unique point of view within your communities.

Exercise

Spend a few minutes finding three news stories, commentaries or blogs relevant to your industry or area of expertise. Once you’ve read through, consider your point of view and how you can back this up with your own experiences. Condense your responses down into short (140 character or less) summaries. Now consider how you can build time into your day or week to share with your online network your thoughts on relevant industry news. As well as giving your community more insight into you as a professional, you’ll signpost your interests to LinkedIn and receive better, more tailored alerts (news stories, potential collaborators and job vacancies) in your newsfeed as a result.

TIP: If you’re going to set aside time each week to contribute to your communities, it’s worth keeping a notebook or a digital ‘clipping’ application like Evernote where you can file away ideas and thought-provokers as you spot them.

Common sense rules apply – do not post opinions that are going to land you in hot water. If what you’re about to say may appear controversial, get feedback first or sleep on it. Many companies also have their own social media policy – so make sure you check with your HR department or line manager if you’re in any doubt about what you should steer clear of posting.

TIP: Your digital footprint will be all the more cohesive to a searcher if you share your various contributions across several platforms. One example might be writing a thoughtful Amazon review on a new publication relevant to your industry or line of interest, and sharing that review to your LinkedIn or Twitter communities. In turn you can share your various social media profiles on a page created on aggregator sites like www.about.me, which not only showcase your top level information (‘headline’ and ‘summary’), but link off to all the other places on the web where there’s information about you.

Remember that you can and should develop a unique point of view at each step of the way of your career. If you overhear a more senior figure discussing an emerging trend, make a mental note to delve deeper into the topic in order to discover what you think. If you’re new in your very first role, your fresh insight into an innovative app or a customer complaint is as valid as that of someone further up the hierarchy. Equally, if you’re more senior in your role, listening to the perspectives of those around you might help you see things from different points of view – one of the key attributes of the socially engaged CEO you discovered earlier in this workbook.

Engage and exchange

“**GIVE TO OTHERS** without having an agenda. When you help others in this way, the reciprocity will surprise you. So share other people’s posts, make positive and intelligent comments, suggest resources and solutions, and rack up points on the karmic scorecard in the clouds,” says social media thought leader Mari Smith^{ix}.

Remember that networking is at the heart of any online activity you engage in. See it as a conversation and a two-way one at that, and you’ll not only see your network expand quicker and your professional status as an engaged member of your industry cemented sooner, but you’ll be leaving behind a solid digital footprint for a future opportunity-maker to discover.

Tips for instilling the law of reciprocity in your digital activities:

1. “Don’t use Twitter [or any other social network] as a megaphone: Review your last few days of tweets and make sure around 50% of your engagement is starting with an ‘@’ or ‘RT’,” says Peg Fitzpatrick. In other words, don’t just throw out your opinions and log off until next time you have something to say; respond to or thank those who engage in the debate you’re starting. Don’t just be a conversation starter either; take time to scroll through newsfeeds. What’s being said by your community that you can add to?
2. Join relevant professional groups. Once accepted, ensure you introduce yourself, comment on recent discussions and questions, and pose your own.
3. Create your own groups. If you can’t find the group or list you want on Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter, create it yourself! Define your message, who the group is for and how members can best engage, and share it widely with the most relevant subsets of your network.
4. Don’t be shy of showing off your accomplishments. Treat your profile as your portfolio by adding relevant slide presentations, links and any other material to each of your positions listed on LinkedIn (via edit mode). Invite comments and questions to show you are open, ensure you have permission from any relevant parties to post files, and review regularly to check relevancy. If you’re doing a batch upload you might want to consider temporarily switching your settings so that changes made to your profile page do not plug up the newsfeed.
5. Attending a talk or industry event gives you prime opportunity to share unique assets – images, quotes from a panel or learning from a master-class – with your community. If you aren’t a fan of posting while you’re at events, diarise ten minutes or so straight after or the next day to share your discoveries with those in your network not fortunate enough to attend.

TIP: Upon joining LinkedIn groups you may find your inbox bombarded with updates. Make most efficient use of your membership by changing your notification settings to those of ‘weekly digest’ and set time aside each week to contribute to your groups’ conversations.

Become a thought leader

IF THE EXPRESSION 'THOUGHT LEADER' makes you think of the Richard Bransons and Arianna Huffingtons of this world, think again. "Too often, people who are just getting started in the working world feel they have little to say. Nothing could be further from the truth," says LinkedIn's Catherine Fisher.

A thought leader, says Forbes, "is a person who identifies trends, common themes and patterns within a particular industry or area of expertise to help others identify new opportunities for solutions for growth".^x

By that definition, if you can answer yes to any of the following statements, you are a thought leader in the making:

1. I notice what's going on around me in my industry and I have opinions about those things.
2. I have had experiences at work – good and bad – which I have learned from and which others could learn from also.
3. Someone who aspires to do my job would benefit from hearing what I have to say.
4. Someone more senior in my organisation could benefit from hearing my thoughts and ideas.

If managing your newfound digital presence is taking up too much time, use FocusBooster, a time management app which tracks how much time you spend on certain activities and allows you to plan better.

One of the simplest ways to build up your credentials as a thought leader is to blog on LinkedIn's open publisher platform (no web design or coding experience needed!): "Executives are being found and offered plum opportunities by their target employers because their blogging activity positioned them as subject matter experts, and a good fit for companies," says Meg Guiseppi, author of *Ten Keys To Amplify Your Executive Brand Online*^{xi}.

When it comes to writing blog posts on LinkedIn, or even starting a private blog on a personal domain, one of the most common questions people ask is: "What will I write about?"

You'll need to spend some time thinking this through. Look back over your LinkedIn keywords and the points of view section to consider what topic areas you have the most to say on. What areas of your line of work energise you most? Is there a particular publisher or brand whose content usually gets you thinking?

Don't be afraid to pick a niche: "One thing is sure about [social media]: there are some people interested in every subject and every side of every subject. By establishing yourself as a subject expert, you will make yourself interesting to some subset of people," says Peg Fitzpatrick.

But equally, you might just want to have your say about the topic of the day, or share your own experiences more broadly, whether that's "lessons you've learned in business or your point of view on the latest trends in your industry or the day's top business news"^{xii}.

Get the thought processes going on what you might be able to blog about via LinkedIn's open platform, by finishing the following headlines in relation to your own experiences. To showcase how thought leadership is relevant at all stages, we've included some examples, as might be filled in by a brand executive of a financial institution in her first role after graduating university:

	MY HEADLINE	EXAMPLE...
How to ace...		your first week in banking as a newcomer
A quick guide to...		grasping financial jargon as a beginner
A complete guide to...		your first six months in a graduate training programme
What I wish I'd known before...		my first performance review
Five of the best...		questions to ask throughout the recruitment period when you're a first jobber
Rules for...		launching a new financial app as a beginner (with tips and insights from experts)

TIP: If analytics tools show your blog posts aren't getting traction, move on and try something new. But first, ensure you've adequately promoted your work. Don't be afraid to share your links many times over – not everyone is using social media in real time. An app like Buffer can help you plan your posts, and repeat them automatically at the most opportune times.

With each thing you post, whether it's an article you've read and have an opinion on, or a blog you've written, signpost it with a clear, concise and punchy sentence summarising why you think it's interesting to your network. If you think it's only interesting to a niche sector of your network, say so.

Including a call to action when you post a link to your blog can also increase your chances of engagement. "Do you agree with X?", "Please share with anyone in your network who is interested in X", "I'd love to know what you think about my latest blog post on X".

Once you're confidently up and running as a blogger, you may reach out to other bloggers and offer to write guest posts, or approach professional bodies and trade organisations who may require volunteer writers for their publications and communications.

If you don't feel you have the time to commit to regular or even occasional blogging, another option is to apply your expertise to answering questions on the question and answer website Quora, where half a million global users ask thought-provoking questions on a range of subjects for experts and thought leaders to chip in with their ideas.

TIP: Once you've published blogs you'll no doubt want as wide an audience on them as possible, maybe sharing them on Twitter. Increase visibility and your community size with Followerwonk – an app that allows you to search for people by area of interest, industry, profession or keyword.

Final thoughts

As you've navigated this workbook, you'll hopefully have come up with new ideas of your own for how you can elevate your digital presence. In the next section you're going to create a concise personal action plan of the steps you can start taking today to make your digital footprint stand out from the crowd.

In addition to the more obvious benefits of optimising your digital footprint – elevating your professional reputation, establishing your expertise and expanding your network and potential for future opportunities – you may have noticed that in the process you'll also be required to sharpen up your writing skills, put your creativity to good use, and become more empowered as a result of taking charge of your own destiny.

Number of LinkedIn members
one month after launch: 4,500
Number today: 300 million
LinkedIn's target: 3 billion
members (every working
professional in the world)

As you embark on this new digital journey, know that there is no tried and tested path. Social networks are a relatively new phenomenon and the 'experts' in this field are still grappling with new platform changes and developments, many of which can disrupt the entirety of their life's blogs without a moment's notice! While this may seem disconcerting, we hope that you – just like those who lead your organisations – will rise to the challenges of communicating in the 21st century.

Your personal action plan

Having identified the strengths and weaknesses of my current digital footprint, I intend to action the following tasks in order to develop the strong and eliminate the weaker elements:

In order to lay the foundations of a great digital profile, I commit to tackling some of these basic rules and tips within one month (from part one, particularly those in the 'Get the basics right' section)...

The ideas that have most inspired me throughout this workbook, which I will shape into how I go about building my digital profile, include...

Thinking back over my career to date, my thought leadership credentials can be summed up as follows...

How will I turn these into actions?

everywoman Experts

every
woman

EVERYWOMAN CREATES WORKBOOKS ON TOPICS that matter most to our Network members. We draw on member surveys and the latest thinking from the academic and business worlds, as well our own experiences as we navigate our careers. Each workbook offers practical advice, enabling tangible actions for your daily work lives ahead of those important performance reviews.



Maxine Benson MBE & Karen Gill MBE

everywoman was founded over 15 years ago by Maxine Benson and Karen Gill, who recognised the need to change the landscape for women in business. By setting up a forum for like-minded women to share experiences, they provided a backdrop that enabled confidence and success to grow. The everywomanNetwork now serves as a global tool to enable members the world over to propel their careers or grow their own businesses through online membership.

everywoman workbook team

Rebecca Lewis, Associate Editor

Mel Spencer, Managing Editor

Kate Farrow, Senior Client Manager

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Catherine Fisher, Senior Director Corporate Communications, and Leslie Hobbs, Senior Public Relations Manager, both at LinkedIn, San Francisco, for their advice and guidance on elevating your online profile.

Any topics you'd like to see covered on the **everywomanNetwork**? We'd love to hear from you:
contact@everywoman.com

Copyright

© 2015 Everywoman Ltd. All rights reserved worldwide. This publication is protected by law, and all rights are reserved, including resale rights: no part of this publication may be reproduced and you are not allowed to make copies and distribute or sell this workbook to anyone else. You may only use it if you are a member of the everywomanNetwork and have downloaded it from www.everywoman.com

No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organisation acting or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Everywoman Ltd or the authors/experts.

Further reading

Related everywoman workbooks

Powerful workplace communication

Executive presence

Developing leadership behaviours

Online resources

Jennifer Holloway on creating your own personal brand

Jennifer Holloway's blog

Peg Fitzpatrick's blog

Official LinkedIn blog

Endnotes

- i. blog.linkedin.com/2014/04/18/the-next-three-billion/
- ii. internetlivestats.com/twitter-statistics/
- iii. zephoria.com/social-media/top-15-valuable-facebook-statistics/
- iv. forbes.com/sites/williamarruda/2015/04/01/how-linkedin-helps-women-shatter-the-glass-ceiling/
- v. Catherine Fisher, Senior Director, LinkedIn in interview with everywoman (April 2015); all subsequent quotes attributable to same.
- vi. forbes.com/sites/deborahljacobs/2013/05/17/how-an-online-reputation-can-hurt-your-job-hunt/
- vii. jennifer-holloway.co.uk/#!/Bad-Buzzword-Bingo-2014/c2de/8F447538-4F80-4599-8825-B8A538B708F6
- viii. jennifer-holloway.co.uk/#!/LinkedIn-Invitations-Make-It-Personal/c2de/B45E6D08-C4F2-4AA7-BB38-E78E635DC26B
- ix. marismith.com
- x. forbes.com/sites/glennllopi/2011/08/01/10-steps-to-successful-thought-leadership-to-elevate-your-career-and-your-organization/
- xi. executivecareerbrand.com/10-keys-to-amplify-your-executive-brand-online/