Tips for LinkedIn Summary

Tips 1-7: What to say

Below are seven of the most common topics covered in great summaries. You don't need to cover them all, but address at least a few to ensure enough substance.

1. Describe what makes you tick

Passion is the heart of some of the best summaries. Opening up about what you love to do adds context to your career. Think about what excites you most professionally — what drives you besides your paycheck? This is an especially good angle if you're younger and don't have much work experience.

2. Explain your present role

Put your job title aside and describe what you do in simplest terms. Sharing the problems you solve, for whom, and how, is a great way to demonstrate your skills, industry knowledge, and/or work style.

3. Frame your past

You have the freedom to call out what's important in your job history and to gloss over what's not. If you've made career pivots or have held seemingly unrelated roles, connect the dots so they make sense. Better yet, frame the discord as an advantage and explain why it sets you apart.

4. Highlight your successes

Cite the biggest takeaway from your experience section. Look across roles and combine accomplishments if you can. This is especially applicable if you're in mid- to late-stage career.

5. Reveal your character

Choose stories and words that show who you are as a person, not just a professional. Great summaries hint at traits such as gratitude, humility, and humor. Authenticity is key, so be honest with yourself. Think of the one trait you're most known for, and weave it in.

6. Show life outside of work

Round out your identity by sharing a hobby, interest, or volunteer role. Relate your outside passions to your work if you can. If you share a personal story, be sure it serves to reinforce your professional strengths.

7. Add rich media

Sometimes it's easier to explain your impact or achievement using an image, video, or an article — don't be afraid to add media to your profile, and tee it up in your summary.

Tips 8-14: How to say it

The format and tone of your summary matters just as much as the ideas in it. Once you have your core content, follow these tips to embellish and refine.

8. Make your first sentence count

Every word matters in your summary, but your first words really matter. If you don't hook your audience right away, you'll lose them. This means NO "Hi, I'm Jane Smith and I'm glad to meet you." and NO "Thanks for visiting!" Don't waste precious characters on filler — cut right to the good stuff to pull your audience in.

9. Pump the keywords

To improve your search rank on LinkedIn and Google, include keywords that highlight your top skills. Listing 'Specialties' at the end of your summary is one way to pack them in. Which words? Job descriptions and other relevant profiles are great keyword sources.

10. Cut the jargon

Avoid overused words that have lost meaning, like "strategic," "motivated," and "creative." Tap a thesaurus for alternatives, or better yet, show you have those traits with an example or quick story. At a minimum, cross-check your summary with the most overused buzzwords on LinkedIn profiles.

11. Write how you speak

Think about how you would speak to new contact at a conference, and write that way. Read your summary out loud so you can check your voice. If you wouldn't say it, don't write it. That also means using the first-person "I" NOT "Jane Smith has 20 years of experience". Lay off the special characters and emojis too.

12. Tell stories

Stories make you memorable. Leading with "When I was 11 years old..." or "My former boss sat me down one day…" to reveal why you love coding has more punch than just stating, "I'm passionate about coding."

13. Create white space

People will skim your summary, so help by breaking up the text. Steer clear of long paragraphs. Don't use a five-syllable word when a one-syllable word is just as good. Use bullet points or numbered lists, but make sure they flow — lists aren't an excuse for sloppy thinking.

14. Ask for what you want

Think about what you want your audience to do after reading your summary. An invitation to connect is a great way to end, but depending on your goal, you may ask for something else. Be specific and you'll be more likely to get what you want.

Whatever you do, write something in your summary section. It's a strategic piece of content, so don't miss the opportunity to have it work for you.

https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/linkedin-best-practices/2016/7-linkedin-profile-summaries-that-we-love-and-how-to-boost-your-own#whattosay

https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/2014/12/5-tips-for-picking-the-right-linkedin-profile-picture