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Top five tips for a stellar LinkedIn profile

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On February 25th, I joined the Boston Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) to lead a LinkedIn Boot Camp! Held at All Steel in the Financial District, I advised both members and non-members of the association on the essential components needed to optimize their LinkedIn profiles and the importance of actually having a complete profile (whether or not you're looking to switch positions or careers). Throughout the event, attendees revised their profiles on their own laptops and asked technical questions throughout, making for an incredibly interactive event. Here's a quick recap of my top five tips for making your LinkedIn profile stellar:

- * No typos: Since LinkedIn is mainly used by professionals, the worst thing you can do is have a typo in your profile. Remember to double check for typos - especially in your header and summary section - as those are the components most read by viewers (and most valuable in a Google keyword search!).
- * Customize your LinkedIn URL: No one likes a long URL (or one riddled with random numbers and characters), so customize it to make it your own! You can change the URL to be your full name, or if that is already taken, your name with one additional number or middle initial. For example, my LinkedIn URL appears as follows: www.linkedin.com/AllisonAndrew.
- * Be personal: In the summary section of your profile, add in major career accomplishments as well as key personal accomplishments; this will demonstrate a well-roundedness to your viewers. Don't be afraid to add a little character to this section too - readers and viewers want to get a feel for you and your personality!
- * Get involved - join LinkedIn groups: Joining groups is the easiest way to expand your network and therefore increase your network reach. You can pre-screen groups (and their members) prior to joining by reviewing the analytics of the group; just click on the "More" tab beneath the group name and select "Group Statistics." And of course, don't hesitate to join in on group discussions - it will increase your experience and image as an industry leader.
- * Highlight the big stuff first: After you complete all of the sections of your LinkedIn profile, you can re-arrange the sections in order to highlight the most important pieces of your profile first. For example, following my "Summary" and "Experience" sections I have dragged up the "Organizations" and "Publications" sections to immediately follow, because these sections are demonstrative of my professional experience and skills.

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