This Mum

PART TWO
The playbook

2026/27 EDITION

LinkedIn Profile Toolkit

Every section of your profile, with a worked example, the limits for 2026/27 and what LinkedIn says about the feed.



Cherise Lindsey
Founder, This Mum
Chartered Marketer

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START HERE

How to use this playbook

Open your profile in another tab and work through the pages in order. An hour is enough for a first pass.



Each page covers one section of your profile.

- **What to put there.** The advice I give clients, in the order I'd work through it.
- **A worked example.** Every example comes from one profile, Helena Marsh, a founder and fractional COO. Helena is fictional. Her profile is built the way I'd build one for a client.
- **The limits for 2026/27.** Character counts and image sizes, checked in November 2026.

Short on time?

Do the photo, background and headline first. Those three appear beside every comment you make.

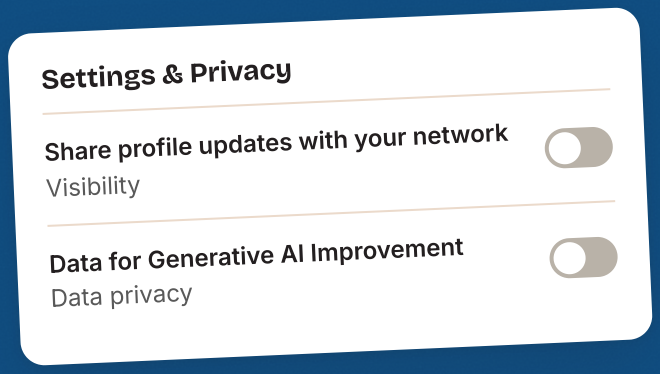
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STEP ONE

Before you edit

Four small jobs to do first. They take about 10 minutes.



Edit in private

In Settings & Privacy, under Visibility, turn off “Share profile updates with your network”. Your connections then see the finished profile and none of the edits along the way. Turn it back on when you have news to share.

Edit your custom URL

LinkedIn gives every profile a random URL. Change it to your name with the edit icon beside “Public profile & URL”. A custom URL can be 3 to 100 characters. A short one is easier to put on a CV, an email signature or a slide.

Choose your AI setting

“Data for Generative AI Improvement” is under Data privacy. For UK members it has been on by default since 3 November 2025. It lets LinkedIn use your profile and posts to train its AI models. Turning it off applies to future use only.

Verify your identity

Verification is free and optional. LinkedIn offers identity and workplace verification, and a badge shows beside your name once it’s done. LinkedIn says verified members get up to 60% more profile views. That is LinkedIn’s own figure, from December 2025, published without a method.

CUSTOM URL

~~linkedin.com/in/helena-marsh-8b21a6304~~

linkedin.com/in/helenamarsh

VERIFICATION BADGE



Helena Marsh

Identity verified

3–100
characters in your custom URL

3 Nov 2025
AI training setting on by default in the UK

2
kinds of verification: identity and workplace

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SECTION ONE

Profile photo

People decide in a few seconds whether you're someone they'd like to talk to. Most of that decision is your face.



Fill the frame with your face, on a plain background, in good light.

Do this

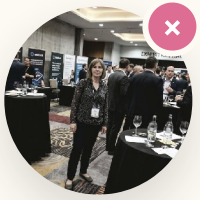
- **Use a recent photo.** You should look like the person who arrives at the meeting.
- **Let your face fill about 60% of the frame.** Head and the top of your shoulders.
- **Face a window.** Daylight from the front gives a clearer picture than a ceiling light.
- **Keep the background plain.** One colour, nothing to read.
- **Look at the camera.** Smile the way you would when you greet a client.

Leave these out

- **Pub, holiday and glamour selfies.**
- **A group photo with other people cropped away.**
- **A full-length shot.** At thumbnail size your face disappears.
- **A logo in place of your face.**
- **A photo from 10 years ago.**

A phone is enough. Stand facing a window, ask someone to hold the phone at eye level, and take 20. One of them will be right.

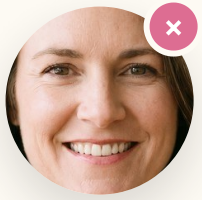
HOW CLOSE IS CLOSE ENOUGH



Too far away



About right



Too close

400 × 400
pixels or larger, square

60%
of the frame filled by your face

JPG or PNG
the file types LinkedIn accepts

This Mum

SECTION TWO

Background

The largest picture on your profile, and the one most people leave blank or fill with everything at once.





Give the background one job.

Good jobs for it

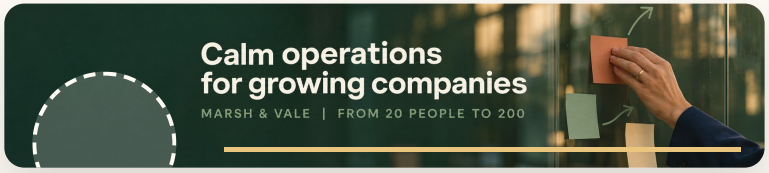
- **Say what you do in one line.** Helena's reads "Calm operations for growing companies".
- **Show your work.** You speaking, a product, a finished project.
- **Show some personality.** A place, a colour or an image that is recognisably yours.
- **Give one piece of proof.** A client result.

What to avoid

- **Rows of logos and several lines of text.** So much at once is hard to take in, and people look away.
- **Your face again.** It's already in your photo.
- **Your headline again.** It's already beneath your name.
- **Words or logos on the left.** Your photo covers that corner.

Premium slideshow. Premium Business, Sales Navigator and Recruiter members can add up to five backgrounds that rotate every three seconds. Give each image one message.

WHERE YOUR PHOTO COVERS THE BACKGROUND



Your photo Words and detail go in this part

1,584 × 396
pixels, a 4:1 shape

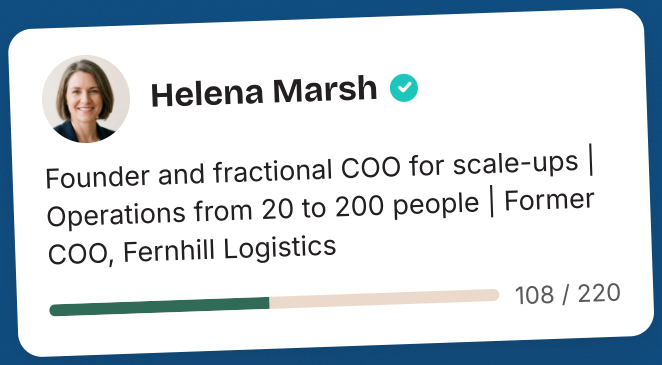
JPG or PNG
the file types LinkedIn accepts

5 images
rotate with Premium

SECTION THREE

Headline

Your headline appears with your name everywhere on LinkedIn: search results, comments, messages and connection requests.



Say what you do, who you do it for, and one piece of proof.

How to write it

- **Lead with the words people search for.** Your role or your service, in plain terms.
- **Name who you work with.** A sector, a company size or a kind of client.
- **End with proof.** A former role, a number or a qualification.
- **Put the most important words first.** Search results and comments show only the start.
- **Be bold and be clear about what you sell.** People believe a claim when the proof is beside it.

THREE EXAMPLES

FOUNDER

Founder and fractional COO for scale-ups | Operations from 20 to 200 people | Former COO, Fernhill Logistics

CONSULTANT

Pricing consultant for B2B software | Price reviews for firms with 50 to 500 staff | 40 pricing projects since 2019

EXECUTIVE

Chief Financial Officer, Brightwell Health | Finance for healthcare scale-ups | Chartered accountant (ACA)

The people and companies in these examples are fictional.

220
characters allowed

108
characters in Helena's headline

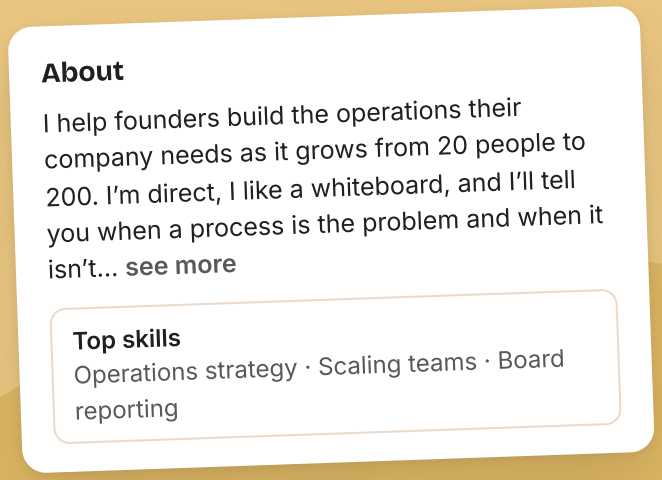
3
parts: what, who for, proof

This Mum

SECTION FOUR

About

An About that could be anyone's helps no one. Write it the way you'd say it across a table.



Sound like someone people could have a conversation with.

- **Write in the first person.** "I", the way you speak.
- **Open with what you do and for whom.** Only the first lines show before "see more".
- **Say what you're like to work with.** One or two true sentences.
- **Give proof.** Results, clients and numbers.
- **Describe how the work starts.** It tells a reader what happens after they write to you.
- **End with how to reach you.**

HELENA'S ABOUT, IN FULL

What I do, and for whom	I help founders build the operations their company needs as it grows from 20 people to 200.
What I'm like	I'm direct, I like a whiteboard, and I'll tell you when a process is the problem and when it isn't.
Proof	In 16 years I've run operations at three scale-ups, including Fernhill Logistics from 40 people to 310. Since 2021 I've worked with 11 founders through Marsh & Vale. Nine raised their next round within 18 months.
Working with me	Working with me starts with one long conversation and a page of notes. After that I'm in your business two days a week until your team runs it themselves.
How to reach me	Email helena@example.com or send me a message here.

2,600
characters allowed

5
short paragraphs in Helena's About

1st
person: "I", the way you speak

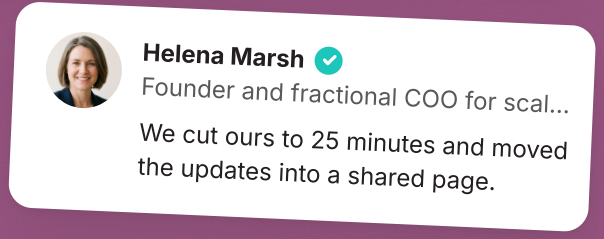
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SECTIONS FIVE AND SIX

Featured & Activity

Featured holds the work you choose to show. Activity shows visitors what you've said this month.





Featured

Pin the work you most want seen.

- **Choose two to four items.** A case study, a talk, an article, or something of value from your website, such as a lead magnet or a tool.
- **Put the strongest first.** It is the one people see first.
- **Give each a title that says what it is.** "Fernhill: 40 to 310 people" tells a reader more than "Case study".
- **Replace items as your work changes.**

Activity

Visitors look here to see what you talk about and how recently.

- **Comment in your own words.** A comment appears with your photo, name and headline, in front of someone else's audience.
- **Add something to the post.** An example, a number or a question.
- **Comment in the weeks when you don't post.** Your Activity section stays current.
- **Skip comment tools and pods.** LinkedIn does not permit them and can hide automated comments.

A WEEK ON LINKEDIN: TWO POSTS, THREE COMMENTS

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Comment	Post	Comment	Post	Comment		

2–4
items in Featured

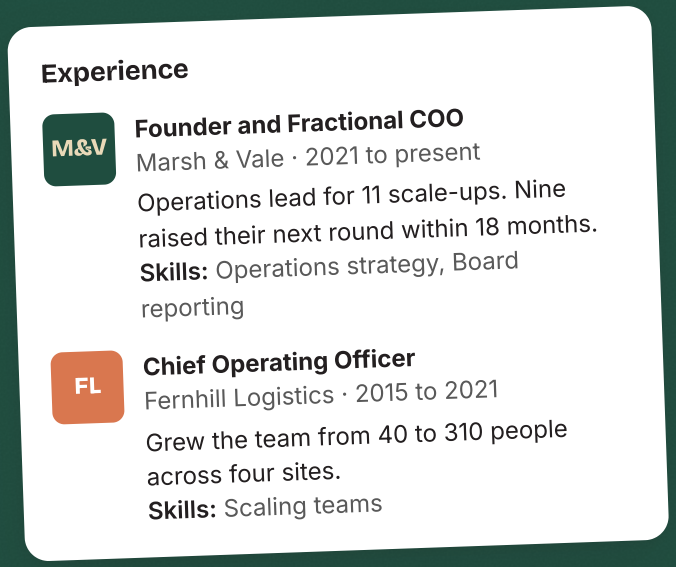
2–5
posts a week, LinkedIn's own range

150–174
words had the highest median reach (Shield)

SECTION SEVEN

Experience

People who scroll this far are deciding whether to contact you. Give them proof.



Under each role, say what changed because of your work.

Do this

- **Use your official job titles.** They are what people search for and what a reference would confirm.
- **Write one or two lines of results per role.** Numbers where you have them: people, revenue, time, sites.
- **Choose the correct company page.** Its logo then shows beside the role.
- **Attach the skills you used.** They then appear under the role.

Keep it short

- **Detail for the last 10 years.** A single line is enough for earlier roles.
- **One entry per employer.** Add promotions as separate positions under the same company.

Add your services

- **Add a Services section.** Choose “Add profile section”, then “Add services”. It is free.
- **List what clients ask you for,** in the words they would search for.
- **Decide where they are held first.** Your profile or your company page. The choice is fixed once set.

BEFORE

Responsible for day-to-day operations across multiple sites and departments.

AFTER

Grew the team from 40 to 310 people across four sites.

1–2
lines of results under each role

10
years of detail is enough

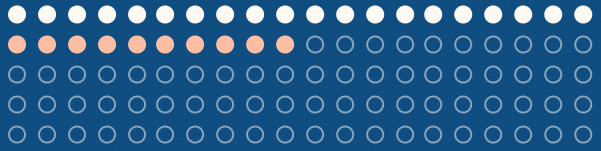
1
entry per employer

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SECTIONS EIGHT TO TEN

Skills & Recommendations

Skills tell LinkedIn and your readers what you do. Recommendations are other people saying it for you.



100 skills allowed. The first 20 to 30 are the ones worth choosing with care.

> **Tom Adeyemi**
> CEO, Brightwell Health
> "Helena rebuilt our planning in one quarter. Our board pack went from 40 pages to six."

Skills

- **Aim for 20 to 30.** LinkedIn allows 100. The editor adds one at a time and shows no target.
- **Choose skills you want to be found for.** Strongest first.
- **Attach each skill to a role.** It then shows where you used it.
- **Leave out basic tools.** Microsoft Office tells a reader nothing.

Education and licences

- **Your highest and most relevant qualifications,** with dates.
- **Current memberships and certificates.** Remove any that have expired.

Recommendations

- **Ask clients, managers and colleagues** who know your work well.
- **Suggest what they might mention.** A project, a result, what you were like to work with.
- **Ask soon after the work ends.** The detail is still fresh.
- **Write them for others too.**

More sections

Volunteering, projects, publications, awards and languages each have a section. Add the ones that support the work you want next.

Just starting out? With no job history yet, this is where placements, societies and part-time work go: use Projects, Publications and Volunteering.

100
skills allowed

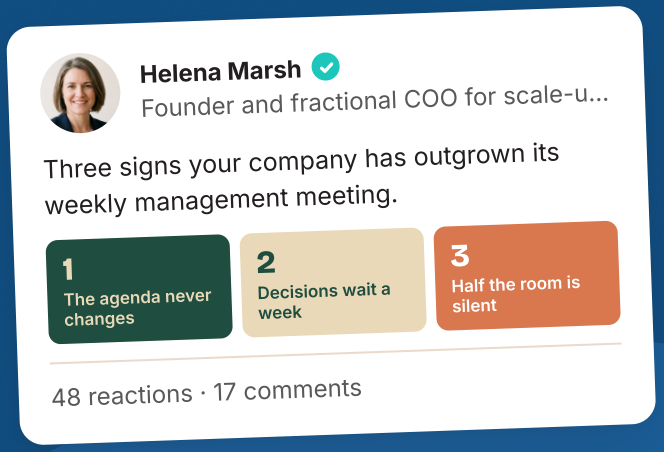
20–30
is plenty

1
skill added at a time in the editor

THE FEED, 2026/27

What LinkedIn says

Six things LinkedIn has said in public since December 2025 about who sees your posts.



MATCHED BY TOPIC TO

Operations | Scale-ups | Founders | Management

Posts are matched by topic

Ranking uses large language models to read what a post is about and match it to people by industry, skills and experience.

LinkedIn, 12 March 2026

Generic AI posts get less reach

Using AI to help you write is allowed. Generic AI posts are often shown to first-degree connections only.

LinkedIn, May 2026

Engagement bait is shown less

"Comment to agree" prompts, recycled posts and unrelated videos are being reduced.

LinkedIn, 12 March 2026

Hashtags do not change reach

They stay clickable and searchable. LinkedIn says they have no effect on how widely a post is distributed.

Gyanda Sachdeva, LinkedIn, December 2025

Automation breaks the rules

Comment tools and engagement pods are not permitted. Automated comments can be hidden.

LinkedIn, 13 March 2026

Post two to five times a week

LinkedIn's own recommended range. Space out posts on similar topics so each one has time to be seen.

Gyanda Sachdeva, LinkedIn, December 2025

What to do with this

- Post about your work
- Add your experience to AI drafts
- 2–5 Posts a week
- Comment in your own words

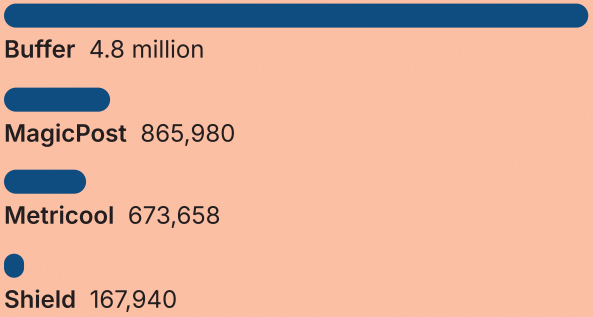
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What the data shows

Four independent studies. Each describes the accounts it measured, so treat them as a guide.

6.5m

posts analysed across the four studies on this page.



FOUR FINDINGS

150–174 **words had the highest median reach**
Larger accounts did better with shorter posts.
Shield, 167,940 posts, Nov 2025 to Feb 2026

35% fewer **impressions when a link preview card is the only visual**
A typed URL in the post made no measurable difference.
MagicPost, 865,980 posts, 2024 to 2026

Carousels **and multi-image posts beat single images and video**
On most measures, on personal profiles.
Metricool, 673,658 posts, early 2026

3pm–8pm **on weekdays had the highest engagement**
Local time. Wednesday was the strongest day.
Buffer, 4.8 million posts, Sep 2026

ADVICE TO DROP

- **Use 3 to 5 hashtags**
  LinkedIn says hashtags have no effect on distribution.
- **Link in the comments**
  MagicPost found no measurable benefit over a URL in the post.
- **1,200–1,600 characters**
  No 2026 study I checked supports this range.
- **3x reach for selfies**
  I could not trace this figure to an original source.

GONE SINCE 2023

- **Creator mode.** The switch was removed in 2024. Its tools are open to everyone.
- **Profile videos.** New ones can no longer be added.
- **Gold Top Voice badges.** Removed at the end of 2024.

BEFORE YOU CLOSE THE TAB

Checklist

Print this page or tick it off on screen.



Before you edit

- [ ] “Share profile updates” is off while I edit
- [ ] I’ve chosen my AI training setting
- [ ] My custom URL is my name (edit it under “Public profile & URL”)
- [ ] I’ve verified my identity, if it’s offered to me

The top of my profile

- [ ] My photo is recent and my face fills the frame
- [ ] My background has one job
- [ ] No words sit under my photo, on laptop or phone
- [ ] My headline says what I do, who for, and gives proof
- [ ] My contact details and website link are current

About

- [ ] It’s in the first person and sounds like me
- [ ] The first two lines say what I do and for whom
- [ ] It ends with how to reach me

The rest of my profile

- [ ] Featured shows two to four pieces of work, strongest first
- [ ] Each role says what changed because of my work
- [ ] Each role has the correct company page and skills
- [ ] My services are listed in a Services section
- [ ] I have 20 to 30 skills, strongest first
- [ ] I’ve asked two people for a recommendation
- [ ] Expired certificates are removed

On the feed

- [ ] I post about the work I want to be known for
- [ ] I comment in my own words each week
- [ ] Hashtag blocks, pods and comment tools are gone
- [ ] “Share profile updates” is back on

ABOUT THIS MUM

Rather have yours done for you?

In a LinkedIn Profile Rebuild, every section in this playbook is written for you.



This Mum

A profile ready for when people look you up.

This Mum is a London consultancy for brand, marketing and commercial strategy, founded by Cherise Lindsey. Cherise is a Chartered Marketer with more than 15 years in multinational and family office organisations.

The LinkedIn Profile Rebuild is for consultants, founders and executives. Your profile is read, your work is researched, and every section is rewritten with you, in your voice.

thismum.co.uk/linkedin-profile-rebuild

EMAIL	email@thismum.co.uk
LINKEDIN	linkedin.com/in/cheriselindsey
WEB	thismum.co.uk

SOURCES

LinkedIn, "Improving the Feed", newsroom post, 12 March 2026.

Gyanda Sachdeva, LinkedIn, reported by Social Media Today, December 2025.

LinkedIn Help, skills limit and Premium background slideshow, read November 2026.

LinkedIn News, verification figures, 9 December 2025.

Shield, post length study, 167,940 posts, Nov 2025 to Feb 2026.

MagicPost, link study, 865,980 posts, 2024 to 2026.

Metricool, format study, 673,658 posts, early 2026.

Buffer, timing study, 4.8 million posts, September 2026.

TechRadar, LinkedIn AI training terms, 22 September 2025.

This guide is independent and is not affiliated with or endorsed by LinkedIn. Limits and features change, so check the live site before relying on a figure. Helena Marsh and the other people and companies in the examples are fictional.

Like the look of this guide?

This Mum designs toolkits, guides, white papers and reports for other businesses too.