Q & A: Recommendations on LinkedIn

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helping you look good in words

Q & A:
Recommendations on LinkedIn

FREE CHECKLIST. If you would like some easy tips for reviving or updating your own LinkedIn profile, please click on https://anitahampl.com/get-checklist .

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UNDERSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

What is a Recommendation on LinkedIn?

- A statement by a first-level Connection, like a "testimonial"
  - Ideally by someone who has worked with you, purchased from you, or employed you
  - A declaration that your work is good enough to praise publicly
- Formally created within the LinkedIn platform
- Reviewed by the recipient:
  - Can be sent back for editing
  - Can be rejected or ignored and nothing will be posted
- Must be accepted by the recipient before publishing
- Posted on LinkedIn in the Recommendations section of their profile
  - Date-stamped
  - Shows headshot, name, and headline of the recommender

Jose Alfaro
VP, Analysis & Strategy at
Arch Coal, Inc.
April 29, 2018, Edwin worked with
Jose in the same group

I worked on several projects with Edwin while obtaining my MBA at Duke. Edwin was willing to take initiative and share the workload. He was always focused on achieving the best results for the group. I would highly recommend working with Edwin as he would be a key addition to any team.

What Do Recommendations Do for Me?

- Establish credibility, trust, and likeability in the eyes of potential employers, clients, or colleagues
- Reinforce what you said about yourself in your Headline, Summary, and Experience sections
- Demonstrate that people who worked with you found it to be a positive experience
- Capture major successes in a precise summary
- "Name drop" (in a subtle way) associations with prominent people
- Help your placement within LinkedIn search among recruiters

- Round out your profile, showing soft skills or any unique traits that might not be addressed in a resume or Experience section
- Keep a reader on your profile a little bit longer

A friend of ours is Sales Executive. He has several well-written, robust Recommendations. And most of them include "he is fun to travel with!"

WOULDN'T THAT MAKE YOU STOP AND LOOK TWICE?

What Should a Recommendation Include?

There are four basic elements to include. Appropriate keywords should be included in these elements.

1. How the writer knows you. Establish a basis for the Rec.
   - Did you graduate university together?
   - Were you their first hire (or vice versa)?
   - Were you an emergency fill-in on a major project?

     - Pam and I shared countless vending machine meals together during our Residencies.
     - I had the good fortune to partner with Chris at ABC Automotive.

2. What they have experienced re: your skills, work habits, expertise, especially qualities that stand out

     - He is a quick learner and has shown the ability to digest large volumes of information in an effective and efficient manner.
     - In one year, her creative thinking and strategic planning resulted in a 5X growth in sales.

3. What they personally enjoyed or respected about your work

     - I had the luxury of knowing that Jacob had my back in his role as Sales Center Manager.

4. That they would recommend you, and for what role or capacity

> ▪ I strongly encourage you to connect with Tom and learn about his security service, as the insights he shares will be well worth your time.

RECEIVING RECOMMENDATIONS

Who Should I Ask to Recommend Me?

First, consider who is your primary audience AT THIS TIME on LinkedIn:

- ▪ Recruiters?
- ▪ Hiring managers?
- ▪ On-line prospects?
- ▪ Local clients and prospects?
- ▪ Directors or C-suite executives in your organization?
- ▪ Community leaders/non-profit board members?

Your LinkedIn presence should be designed for and facing that specific audience. Think about whose Recommendations would impress that audience and go from there.

- ▪ Past or current employers, especially from most recent roles
  - o Direct managers: they will know you better and can most genuinely speak of your strengths and contributions
  - o Higher level managers:
    - ▪ if they are well-known in the field and their name commands respect
    - ▪ if they can articulate a significant impact that you made to the company's success

- ▪ Colleagues or co-workers
  - o They can speak of your personality and how you fit in on a team
  - o They can speak of your spirit of collaboration, as an example

- Past and current clients
  - The more specific examples they can provide, the better
  - They can describe how you solved a problem or overcame an issue

- Management of non-profits or civic boards
  - Their name alone may lend prestige to your profile
  - They can speak to your dedication, volunteer hours, and how you applied your unique skills to accomplish goals

How Do I Ask for a Recommendation?

If you are new at this, start with some easy/friendly people to ask.

- Choose people (identified above) who already have a LinkedIn profile
- Ask to Connect to them if you are not already connected
- Look in their Recommendation section to see if they have experience giving recommendations
- *Call or email first, if practical, so they can look out for your request.*
  - Ask respectfully, never assume that they will help you
  - Tell them what you are looking for, and mention an accomplishment or results that they can spotlight
  - Prepare a sample that they may edit, to save them time
    - They will often cut & paste this sample, which is terrific!
    - This may help expedite their response if they are busy

Once you are Connected (first-level), follow these steps:

Locate and open the prospective Recommender's LinkedIn profile. Click on the "More…" tab next to the blue message button at the top of their page, then click on "Request a recommendation."
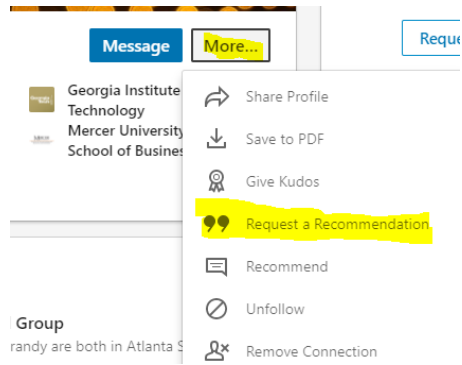
The next window will ask you to select entries from a drop-down box re: how you know them and what position **you** had at the time.

The next window is for your message to request a Recommendation.

Once you hit "send," the request is sent. Your confirmation will be a subtle message in the lower left of your screen.
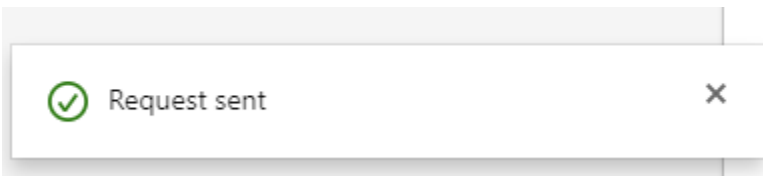
I Already Have a Testimonial, Can I Use It?

That is a great start, especially if it is from someone who is already a first-level Connection to you. But the Recommendation still needs to come through the LinkedIn system so both of you can approve it.

- Your familiarity and relationship with the person will help you decide how to handle the request
- It might be more efficient if you call or email them first
- Explain that your official request will be coming via LinkedIn
- Send them a Recommendation request within LinkedIn as above
- Suggest that they use the testimonial, with restrictions, if any.

    - Here is that great testimonial you wrote for me. Feel free to just copy it here.
    - Please eliminate the reference to our work with Acme Products.

OFFERING RECOMMENDATIONS

What Does Recommending Do for Me?

Offering a Recommendation is the most time-and-thought consuming—though powerful—of the ways you can engage on LinkedIn.

Because it takes effort to compose a good Rec, most people rarely bother. You can shine by offering to write a Rec for someone.

- It makes them look good.

- They will appreciate you.
- You are viewed as a third-party expert in the field.
- It makes you look generous for going to the trouble to write.
- It enhances your reputation by being associated with that person.
- People viewing the Rec can click to see who **you** are.
- Your Recommendation has a much longer lifespan than traditional posts on LinkedIn.
- It's a way for you to spotlight work that you do or have done.

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o As the chief architect on the remodel of the
  Grand Hyatt, I relied upon Bob for …
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Who Should I Write Recommendations For?

There are various reasons to Recommend people on LinkedIn; some reasons may overlap.

- To show kindness/empathy/support
  - o Co-workers facing downsizing or layoffs
  - o Employees who you want upper management to notice
  - o Friends starting new businesses

- To express admiration/gratitude
  - o Colleagues or vendors who helped significantly on a project
  - o Service providers who went beyond the call of duty
  - o Organizers of local charity events that were meaningful to you

- To gain exposure to your own profile
  - o Prominent professionals who you worked on projects with
  - o Popular local suppliers or civic leaders
 - o Broadcast media or podcasters who hosted you

You want to offer Recommendations to people who will appreciate them. Before investing time and energy into writing a Rec, make sure that the recipient is an active user of LinkedIn. Here is how:

- Look at their Connections; if they have less than 300 it is probably not worth your time
- Notice if their Experience section looks up to date.
- Check their "Activity" to see if they are in the habit of commenting or liking posts in the newsfeed.

How Do I Offer a Recommendation?

Make sure you are Connected (first-level) to your Recommendee.

Locate and open their LinkedIn profile. Click on the "More…" tab next to the blue message button at the top of their page, then click on "Recommend."
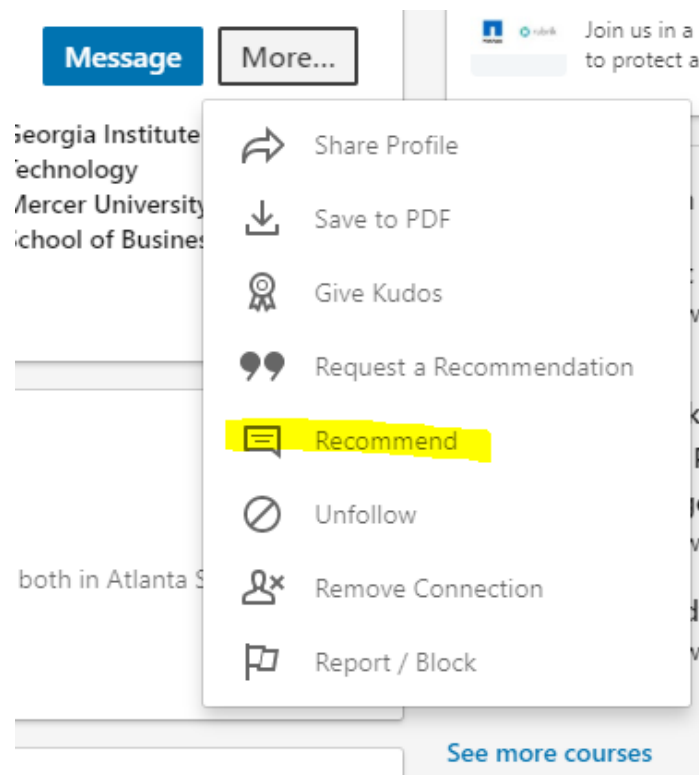
A drop-down box will ask how you know them and what position **they** had at the time.

The next window is for your message as you offer a Recommendation.

What Shall I Write in My Recommendation?

Remember that you want to include meaningful keywords in every Recommendation. Here again are the four elements to include, as spelled out on the second page of this report.

1. How you know the Recommendee.
2. What you have experienced re: their skills, work habits, expertise, especially qualities that stand out
3. What you personally enjoyed or respected about their work
4. That you would recommend them, and for what role or capacity

Recall your reason for each Recommendation, also:

- To show kindness/empathy
- To express admiration/gratitude
- To gain exposure to your own profile

You want your Recommendation to spotlight the recipient to make them stand out among the competition. **A by-product of this will be attention and interest to you and your profile.**

A good tip is to look at the recipient's LinkedIn profile and glean a sense of what is most important to them.

- If their headline is more than a default job title, and says "Superhero for retailers with shrinkage issues," make sure you speak to that.

- Their Skills & Endorsements section may have the top three Skills (which are really keywords) listed on top. Try to include one or more in your Rec. Keywords within Recommendations carry some weight in the search function.

- Look at any Recommendations that THEY have given. You may notice qualities/traits that they seem to admire in others (diligence,

passion, peacemaking, attention to details). If so, they will love to see those in the Rec you write for them.

Try to highlight specific achievements that went beyond the expectation. Use metrics where possible. **Avoid bland or generic wording.**

Can You Show Me Some Templates or Ideas I Can Use?

Sure. I will attach it as the last 4 pages of this report in case you want to print them out.

In Conclusion

Recommendations are not hard to write, if you understand why you are writing it and how meaningful it will be to your recipient. You are truly honoring your recipient by taking the time to write one!

If you are new to LinkedIn or just want to refresh your presence, check out the free checklist for helpful tips https://anitahampl.com/get-checklist .

Best wishes as you grow your visibility through Recommendations on LinkedIn!

Anita Hampl

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helping you look good in words

==Need more help?== Want to brainstorm Recommendations or other parts of your LinkedIn presence?

Schedule an affordable 45-minute review session at *https://anitahampl.com/get/calendar* Redeem Coupon Code ==RECOMM== and save!

BONUS PAGE: Templates or Ideas: Try Your Hand!

Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is a coincidence. These are just to get you comfortable with writing some Recommendations for your tribe!

NOTE: Only the first part of each Recommendation will appear without the viewer needing to click "…see more."

Desktops display about 60 words (310 characters including spaces) and mobile phones display only 40 words (175 characters), so **place your important words up front.**

It is just fine to be brief, but try to include the four basic elements. You may rearrange the order that you show them.

Be sure to insert specific, significant keywords into your Recs, depending upon the industry or reason that you are writing! These examples are somewhat generic!

Refer to the person by the name you normally call them (I mean Dr. Rowan, or Jim, or Jimmy---not Grumpy or Slacker 😊). This will be helpful to the reader.

1. **How you know the Recommendee. Establish a basis.**

   (Please be conscious of age discrimination, which is a real thing. Maybe you don't need to say, "Joey and I have worked together for over 25 years" but can say, "Joey was always my most reliable lab partner at XYZ Metals.")

   George designed our website when we merged three dental practices.

   I first met Chris when she coordinated our United Way Kickoff.

   We inherited Taylor when our financial advisor retired to Tahiti!

   Michael was our first marketing intern from Big State University.

   Deion worked with me at two previous employers, in academia and in private industry.

I partnered with Laura as her executive coach when she went solo.

I hired Tamara when I was a District Manager in Houston.

John has been our go-to computer guru through a series of relocations.

The best decision I ever made was to hire Fran to manage our fleet.

I have worked with Mario on various non-profit events.

2. What you have experienced re: their skills, work habits, expertise, especially qualities that stand out.

She is the first person on her team I call whenever I have a question or need help.

With a character above reproach, our board confidently entrusted him with sensitive decisions.

She executed an award-winning advertising campaign that grew our market share considerably.

His work was first rate from concept to execution.

An outstanding sales leader, everyone on his team feels like they are his favorite!

She is a clear thinker and executes business decisions with urgency.

A leader of vision and determination, his results were always improving.

Always cheerful, he is responsive and seems to solve problems magically.

She is always responsive, and her deliverables are impeccable.

He was methodical in his approach to complex system problems.

3. What you personally enjoyed or respected about their work

He humbly credited his staff when he won the President's Award.

She was unafraid to ask the tough questions when necessary.

I loved walking into trade shows with him; I think he knows everyone in the industry.

I could start to describe a problem and she would be formulating a solution on the spot.

Taylor was sensitive to our risk tolerance and called us when market news was volatile.

His mentorship inspired me to continue my graduate studies when I was ready to give up.

People don't believe me when I say that the auditor is the funniest person in the company.

His tireless work on a municipal project, with many late hours and weekends and changes in scope, paid off in repeat business.

I knew that when he disputed our plans, it was worth reworking them.

His kindness as he shepherded younger employees was remarkable.

4. That you would recommend them, and for what role or capacity.

I would jump at a chance to have him on my team.

I envy the accounting professionals who get to report to Chris.

An employer can rely on him for concrete, measurable results.

She would be an asset to any company experiencing turmoil.

I can recommend Taylor's work with enthusiasm.

If you're looking for a relatable manager who walks the talk, you'd do no better than to consider Deion.

For a self-starter who will make your event run seamlessly, call her!

You can count on Fran in demanding or emergency situations.

His charisma opened doors that had been closed to his predecessors, resulting in lucrative partnerships.

This will be the last computer guru you will ever need to hire, you'll be so satisfied.

Final thoughts re: writing a Recommendation:

Please don't stress over this. "Done" is better than perfect and it will honor your Recommendee!

And insider's secret: People don't read!! Get the keywords in there, have someone check your spelling and grammar, and go for it! You can do it!

Hope this was helpful,

Anita

Schedule an affordable 45-minute review session at *https://anitahampl.com/get/calendar*
Redeem Coupon Code RECOMM and save!