



Figure 9: The LinkedIn navigation bar

1.5.1 Main navigation: the My Network link

My Network is where you manage the people you're connected to. It shows you the size of your first-degree network, invitations to connect, and suggestions for people you may know. This last is useful for expanding your inner circle; you'll use it in **Part 3**.

A word to the wise: never, ever click **Add Connections+** on the right. It's a blunt instrument that sends LinkedIn every email address in your address book, including those you've had no contact with for years. There are far better ways to network than the Contact Import function.

1.5.2 Main navigation: the Jobs link

As a budding six-figure freelancer, you don't want a job. But it's useful to know of companies with open jobs—because they may have roles a freelancer could do instead. More on interpreting these clues in **Part 3**.

1.5.3 Main navigation: the Messaging link

Messaging is an Inbox for everything you and your Connections send to each other. It's how you'll first contact people who interest you on LinkedIn. It's also a quick way to reach the **Profiles** of people you've exchanged messages with.

1.5.4 Main navigation: the Notifications link

This tab collects useful information on your activity on LinkedIn. Not just your Posts, but also how people *reacted*—whether they added a Comment or Like—which count as responses worth following up. It's a useful source when trawling for interesting people.

1.5.5 Main navigation: the Work link

The **Work** tab contains options for LinkedIn's commercial (often paid-for) features: tools for advertisers and recruiters like job posting and advertising, plus options for **LinkedIn Premium**: its paid subscriptions.

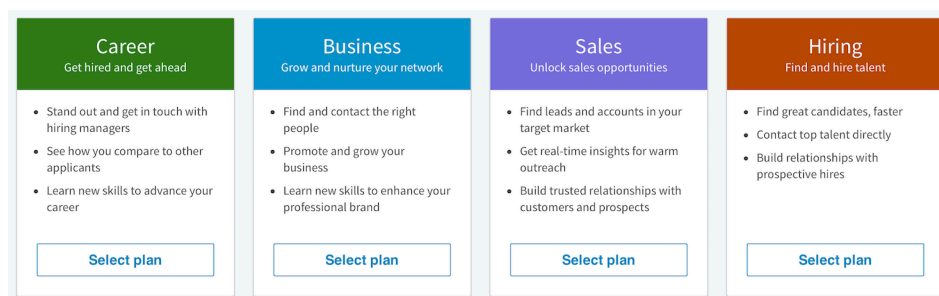


Figure 10: LinkedIn subscription options

Nothing in **100 Days, 100 Grand** needs a paid subscription, but the **Business** and **Sales** options may make your post-100 days life easier; you'll explore them on **Day 22**. The main section of interest to freelancers is **Groups**, also on **Day 22**. Before that, your **Profile**.

///

1.6 UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROFILE

You reach your **Profile** from the LinkedIn logo on the main navigation. (Or click your name on the left below it.) Your Profile brings together your professional face on the web with the Posts and Comments you make across the site.

Your Profile, of course, starts with your **name**. (There's a 20+40 first and last name character limit.) Below it is the goal of **Day 1**: your **sales headline** (up to 120 characters).

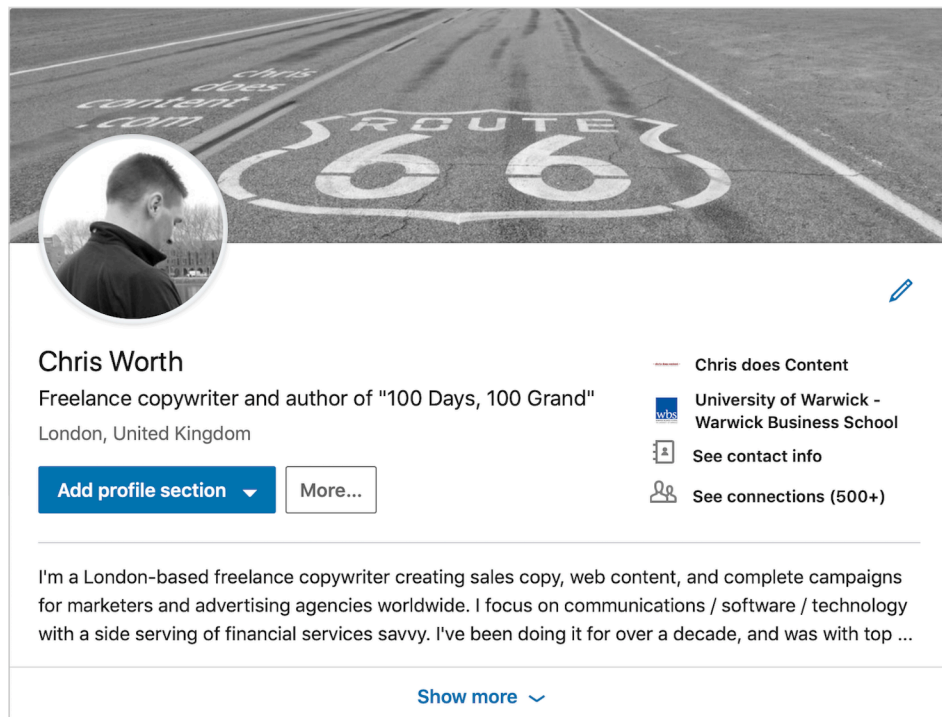


Figure 11: The Author's LinkedIn headline

1.6.1 Understanding your headline

Your single-sentence profile headline is among the most important things you'll write in the next 100 days. You'll write it in the Tasks. It's not until **Day 8** that you'll start writing or rewriting the rest of your Profile—after all, you haven't worked out who your ideal customers are yet!

Your headline is important because it *sells you*. And it's the *only* place on LinkedIn you'll make an overt sales pitch. LinkedIn is for making contacts and networking; spamming your contacts with marketing is just plain rude.

Take a look at these LinkedIn headlines. If you already have a **Profile** on LinkedIn, your headline probably resembles them.

- *Sales Expert at Norton Clinical*
- *Creative Director at Haddon & Hicks*
- *Software Developer at Scythe Data*
- *Marketing Strategist at North Sky Marketing*
- *Regional Buyer at On The Grapevine*
- *Senior Consultant at Mainbeam Consulting*

Why do so many headlines look like these? Because that's LinkedIn's default: if you don't write a headline for yourself, it displays your current job title plus your company name, connected by the preposition *at*.

Three things work against default headlines. First, they're not very interesting—bland and abstract. Second, not one tells you much about what these people *do*—just what they *are*. And third, *all of these are one-man companies . . .* but you'd never tell.

That last is important, because engaging a freelancer should be an easier decision than hiring someone fulltime. (It's the main reason freelancing can be a six-figure vocation.)

If it's obvious from a glance at your Profile that you're a one-man-band available for work, you get more calls, more contacts, and more projects. In the Tasks, you'll turn your headline around: from **what you are** to **what you do for customers**. Here's how you'll do it.

1.6.2 Improving your headline

Take a look at these rewrites:

- *Sales trainer guiding clinicians for tier-1 pharma MNCs*
- *Pay-per-day artworking outsource creating infographics for NYC ad agencies*
- *Freelance sysadmin providing burst capacity to datacentres*
- *Marketer-for-hire smoothing brand plans at finance boutiques*
- *Freelance WSET Cert driving down wine costs for top restaurants*
- *Proposal writer winning public sector RFPs for small builders*

See how much better these are? Three things matter.

1.6.2.1 They tell people what you do

Many freelancers compensate for being one-man-bands by adopting inflated job titles and important-sounding company names. Don't follow them. If you work alone, it doesn't matter if you're the CEO!

People hire freelancers to *perform a function*. If you're not doing the function,

you're not the freelancer they want. So keep your job title *descriptive* and *meaningful*, with terms everyone will recognise. (More about positionings in **Part 2**.) No Ninjas, Gurus, Ideators, or Whisperers please. And don't forget to state the obvious: **that you're available for work**.

1.6.2.2 They appeal to a narrow audience

The second check is whether your sales headline appeals to a specific audience. In a world of superabundance, attention and interest come from *narrowing down* your audience to those who genuinely need you, *not* being broad brush.

It sounds contradictory. But when marketing yourself, the more people you try to gather in, the more will slip through your fingers. Being concrete and narrow brings you more customers than being abstract and broad.

1.6.2.3 They use prepositions

Note the **prepositions** (for, to, at) that connect the job function and audience appeal. Prepositions—joining words—are a big part of the sales copy you'll approach your market with, so it's a good idea to recognise this part of speech.

Prepositions are a great way to improve your sales headline, which you'll do in the Tasks. The **Letter** you'll write in **Part 6**, which is basically a set of personalised sentence fragments connected by prepositions.

1.6.3 Your Profile Intro and sections

Next comes your **Intro**. It's a snapshot of your personal and professional abilities you write for your prospects, with a 2,000 character limit. You'll build it in **Part 2**. Your Profile splits into four main further sections—**Background**, **Skills**, **Accomplishments**, and **Additional Information**—each divided into subsections. It's easy to add to any of these with **Add profile section**.



Figure 12: LinkedIn add profile section

1.6.4 Editing your Profile

If you're logged in, you'll also see an ellipsis and pencil graphic at the top left of each section of your Profile. Clicking them is how you edit each section. You'll see two sections you can't edit—**Dashboard** and **Articles & Activity**, collecting statistics on what you've been doing on LinkedIn—then your **Experience** and **Education**, then sections for **Skills & Endorsements**, **Recommendations**, **Accomplishments**, and **Interests**. Each is useful in its own way—looking at the Profiles of people you're interested in is how you'll

plan the personalised content you put into your **List** and **Letter** in Parts 5 and 6. For now, just get familiar with what's on a LinkedIn Profile. It's your shopfront that's open 24/7.

///

1.7 MAKING CONNECTIONS

It's time to use the feature that defines the site—making a **Connection** to an individual. Once you've found a person of interest, you connect with him or her the same way you would in the real world: by asking for it.



Figure 13: LinkedIn connection options

Sending a connection request is simply an email from your LinkedIn account to theirs; if they accept it, they join your first-degree Connections. You'll start building out your network of first-degree connections in earnest in **Part 4**, but start with these few rules.

1.7.1 Start by reading the Profile

Before doing anything else, read that person's **Profile** and make sure you're connecting for the right reasons. Look for a current job, recent content, activity across LinkedIn like posting articles and comments. These demonstrate you've found a real person open to requests.

1.7.2 Connect before you convert

Always have a reason to connect that isn't a sales pitch. Even if that reason is simply that you'd like to talk. Never be pushy and never ask for a sale in the connection request. What matters is getting that individual (and the host of other individuals he or she will bring to your second- and third-degree rings) into your network.

This is why **100 Days, 100 Grand** sets different targets for LinkedIn Connections and sales prospects: they're at different stages of their journey towards you, and the methods of approach differ.

1.7.3 Start with mutual Connections

When connecting, a great place to start is your shared Connections (the people in the first-degree rings of you both.) As you build your network, you'll be surprised how many Connections you have in common with people you don't know—in your market, your sector, even in distant cities or disparate companies. Use those mutual Connections; they're why LinkedIn works.

1.7.4 Always customise the Connection

When you hit that Connect link, *always* customise the invitation message for (at minimum) the person's name and why you're asking them to Connect. Include why you think you'd be a valuable addition to their network, too.

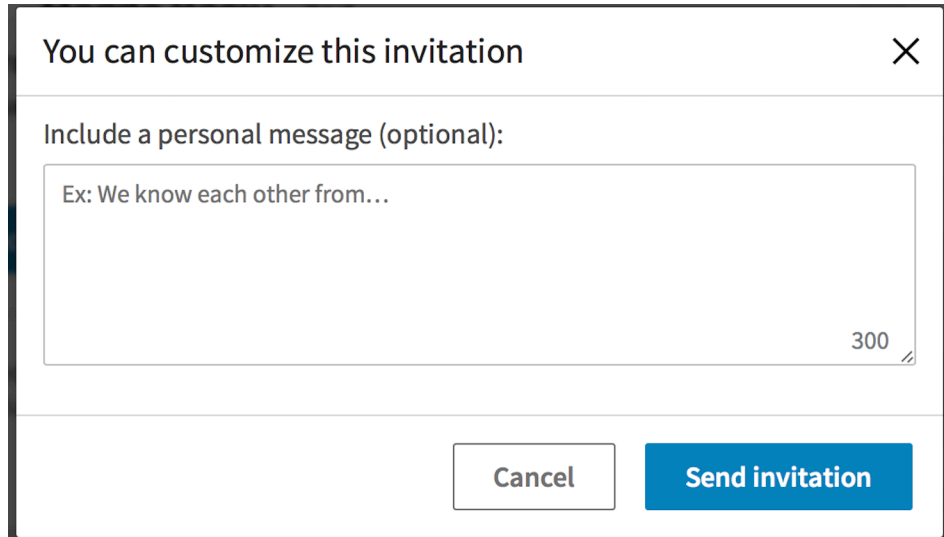
The image shows a LinkedIn dialog box titled "You can customize this invitation" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. Below the title, it says "Include a personal message (optional):". There is a text input field with a placeholder example: "Ex: We know each other from...". A character count "300" is visible in the bottom right of the text field. At the bottom of the dialog, there are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Send invitation".

Figure 14: LinkedIn invitation

It's fine to have a few standard paragraphs you use again and again. But always open with the individual's name and information relevant to them. The whole approach of **100 Days, 100 Grand** is based on shared interests; if you treat everyone with individual attention, your success rate will climb.

SIDEBAR: Blocking or reporting

Sadly, LinkedIn is laced with timewasters, recruiters, and other bad eggs. In general, if you receive an odd connection request or off-colour comment on your content, it's best to simply ignore it. **Blocking or reporting** is a last resort. Use it for spam, trolls or threats.

///

1.7.5 And move on if they say no!

That said, never forget Connecting is a choice. Many people you contact simply won't want to have you in their network—and that's fine. Never push it. And from time to time you may decide you don't want someone in *your* network. If so, don't make a song and dance about it; just head for their Profile (or the list of your Connections under **My Network**) and hit **Remove Connection**.

With LinkedIn introduced and headlines explained, it's time for today's **Tasks**.

TASKS: DAY 1

TASK 1.1: JOIN LINKEDIN

1. Go to www.linkedin.com and enter your usual first and last name and email address.
2. Choose a password.
3. Confirm your membership by clicking in the confirmation email LinkedIn will send.
4. Look at your blank **Profile**, and see the edit links that let you change and update information in each section. (You don't have to complete it all at once; today you'll just add your photo and headline.)

TASK 1.2: SET UP YOUR PROFILE

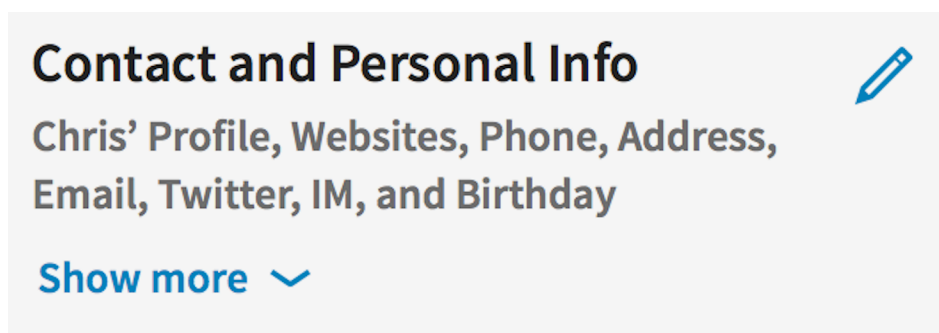


Figure 15: LinkedIn contact and personal info

5. Go to the **Contact and Personal Info** section first. Add as many details as you can, including business address if you're a local business and any links you want to include to services like **Skype (skype.com)** or your personal and business websites.

TASK 1.3: EDIT YOUR INTRO

Next you'll set up the basics of your **Intro**: the part that includes your photo and sales headline. Let's do your photo first.

TASK 1.3.1: Add your Profile photo

1. Click the pencil icon in the first section to edit your Intro.
2. Choose or take a photo of yourself. Try to give the photo story appeal, combining both you and a background that riffs on your work. If you're a jetsetter, try a plane overhead; in finance, a cityscape. If you're white collar, be suited; if you're an engineer, try workwear with a great machine at your back. If people can make a good guess at what you do AND get a sense of what kind of person you are without reading a word

of your Profile, it's ideal.

3. Upload the photo to your Profile. The ideal size is 500 x 500px; LinkedIn will help you resize or crop it. Save it.

TASK 1.3.2: Add your current position



Figure 16: LinkedIn add profile section

1. Hit **Add profile section** and go to *Work Experience* in **Background**. It'll ask you to add a new position.
2. Complete **Title** (*Sales expert, Software developer*) **Company** (the name of your freelance business) and **Location** (your city and country).
3. Choose a job title that makes instant sense to anyone reading it, not *Director* or *Consultant*. One adjective and one noun works: *Architectural designer, Car mechanic, Swedish chef*.
4. Add the date you started your business, and check *I currently work here*.
5. For now, write one simple paragraph as your **Description**. You'll go deeper into this later, but three sentences on what you do, who you do it for, and what results you get for your customers are ideal. (This isn't your Intro; you'll complete that after defining your offer in **Part 2**.) Save it.

TASK 1.4: CREATE YOUR VANITY URL

LinkedIn lets you create a personalised web address so people can find you easily. To reach it, click **Edit public profile & URL**.

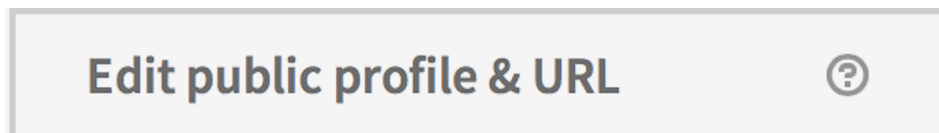


Figure 17: LinkedIn edit public profile

1. You'll see your existing URL, looking something like **linkedin.com/in/firstnamelastname**. If it's not the name you go by, click the pencil icon to edit it.
2. Try to get a URL as close as possible to the firstname and lastname you go by. If you have a common name, this will be harder, in which case keep it as short as you can.

TASK 1.5: CREATE YOUR SALES HEADLINE

Now onto today's main Task: your **sales headline**. It's useful to imagine yourself giving a potential customer your business card: if you couldn't say anything out loud, what would you put on the card that explained what you do? Get something to scribble on: a sheet of paper and a pencil.

1. Divide your sheet into three columns. In the left column, write down a job title that describes your business activity, in 3-6 words. *Freelance designer, Trained chef, Experienced analyst . . .*
2. In the middle column, write a verbal phrase that expands how you work: *contracting by the day, serving 200 covers a night, consulting on databases . . .*
3. In the right column, write another 3-6 words stating one audience you do it for. Be as specific and concrete as possible: *London ad agencies, high-end restaurants, the financial sector . . .* repeat a few times until you have something concrete and descriptive.
4. Connect your second and third phrases with a preposition that sounds right: at, for, to . . .
5. Imagine an ideal customer for your services: one person whose business pain your services can solve. Put yourself in his business situation.
6. If that person didn't know you, would your completed sentence make him want to get in contact, or put you on his shortlist for consideration? (More about getting on shortlists on **Day 65**.) If not, rewrite.
7. Does the complete sentence describe you? If not, try again. When you're happy, go to your **Intro** again and click to Edit.
8. In the **headline** field, add your complete sentence, include your preposition, and hit Save. You'll see your new **sales headline**, in the format [My job title] [what I do] + preposition + [who I do it for].

///

MILESTONE REACHED!

Set up your profile and sales headline.