

Book VI

LinkedIn

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying the LinkedIn 'Edit My Profile' page for Doug Sahlin. The browser's address bar shows the URL http://www.linkedin.com/myprofile?tok=fb_tab_pro. The page header includes the LinkedIn logo and navigation links: Home, Profile, Contacts, Groups, Jobs, Inbox (5), and More... The user is identified as Doug Sahlin, with a welcome message and links for 'Add Connections', 'Settings', 'Help', and 'Sign Out'. Below the navigation, there is a promotional banner for 'Write Like a Professional' software. The main profile section for Doug Sahlin includes his name, title 'President of Superb Images, Inc.', location 'Sarasota, Florida Area', and industry 'Photography'. A recent update from 13 days ago states: 'I'm writing the final chapters on a book about marketing with social media.' The profile is organized into sections: 'Current' (President at Superb Images, Inc., Author at Doug Sahlin), 'Past' (Photo Walk Leader at Doug Sahlin), 'Education' (St. Petersburg College, Harborfields High School, Northport High School), 'Recommended' (1 person has recommended you), 'Connections' (37 connections), 'Websites' (My Company, My Website, My Blog), and 'Twitter' (None, Add Twitter account). On the right side, there is a 'Hi, Doug' greeting with options to forward the profile, edit contact settings, edit public profile settings, and create a profile in another language. Below this is a '90% profile completeness' progress bar and a prompt to 'Complete your profile quickly' by importing a résumé. At the bottom right, there is a 'HIRING!' advertisement for a Senior HR Manager.

Chapter 1: Getting Started with LinkedIn

In This Chapter

- ✓ **Getting to know LinkedIn**
- ✓ **Creating a LinkedIn account**
- ✓ **Creating your profile**
- ✓ **Getting connected**
- ✓ **Finding out who uses LinkedIn**

We cover lots of different forms of social media in this book. Many social media networks are ideal for a business-to-consumer (B2C) business, but when you run a business that relies on other businesses for clients, or when you want to network with other professionals, LinkedIn is the answer.

Many business owners use LinkedIn in conjunction with other social media outlets, such as Twitter and Facebook. LinkedIn can be useful to you if you want to

- ◆ Network with professionals who are in your industry or supporting industries
- ◆ Touch base with your consumers and fuel the marketing fire

When you visit the LinkedIn site, you see a more utilitarian, albeit functional, site than Facebook or Twitter — similar to what you expect when you attend a business seminar: no frills and no bells or whistles. LinkedIn has just enough features to get the job done, and the job is to network with other business professionals to build a powerful network of professional allies who can augment, or add to, your marketing efforts.

In this chapter, we introduce you to LinkedIn and show you how to get connected.

Discovering the Benefits of LinkedIn

At the LinkedIn Web site (www.linkedin.com), you connect with other businesspeople. You can find a wide variety of professionals, from accountants to zoologists. That's what makes LinkedIn unique: You can connect

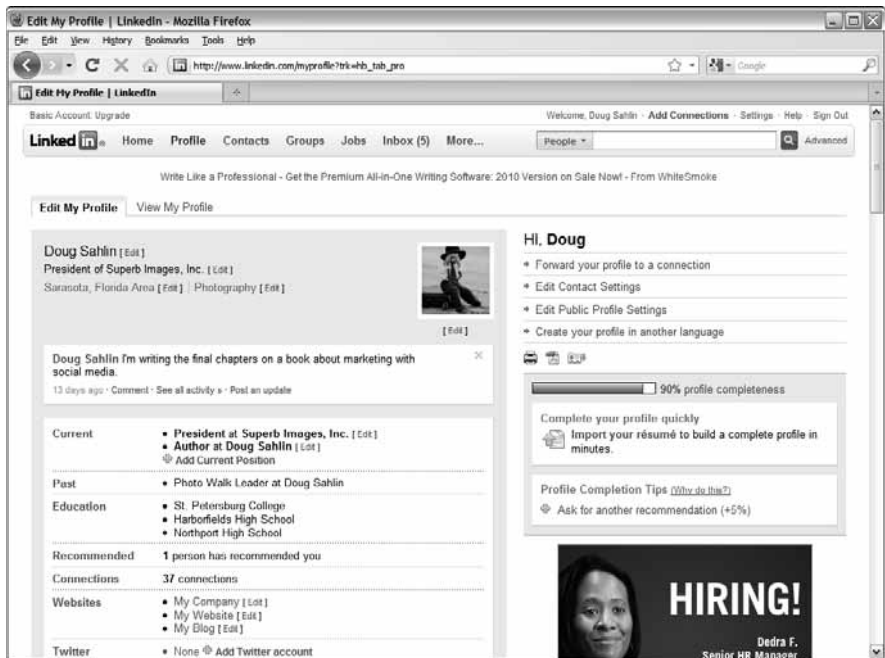
with every conceivable profession and not run into a single teenager who's chatting about what she plans to do this weekend. The site is a no-nonsense, no-frills place to connect with business professionals.

If you've ever heard the theory that only six degrees of separation exist between yourself and any other person on the planet, LinkedIn proves this theory. If you need to connect with someone to further your profession or get a gig, all you have to do is look at the people you're connected to and get the word out. The people you're connected to are connected to other professionals, who are linked to other professionals, and so on. In theory, if you have connections on LinkedIn and you put out a request, eventually you can get connected to the person you need.

This list describes some LinkedIn features you can take advantage of:

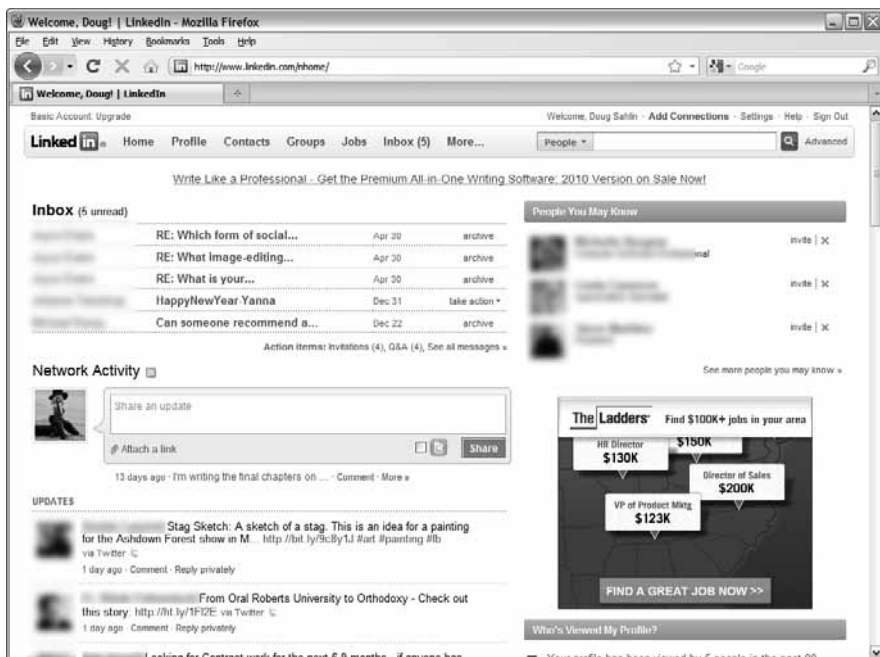
- ◆ **Create a professional profile:** When you join LinkedIn, you create a profile. Unlike on the other social media networks, your profile at LinkedIn is more similar to a résumé. Many professionals, in fact, use LinkedIn to find work or clients. You have a lot of leeway when you set up your profile on LinkedIn, as shown in Figure 1-1. You can add a picture, create a detailed bio, add links to your Web site, and much more.

Figure 1-1:
A LinkedIn
profile
resembles a
résumé.



- ◆ **Expand your reach:** The theory behind LinkedIn is to create connections with people you know — *first-degree* connections. The people they're connected are *second-degree* connections, and the people connected to them are *third-degree* connections, and so on. When second- or third-degree connections are introduced to you by a first-degree connection, you can request that the person become one of your connections. That's how your LinkedIn network grows. If you pursue your LinkedIn network actively, it explodes and you have access to a wide variety of people who can help you in your quest.
- ◆ **Get recommended:** You can demonstrate your expertise on LinkedIn by being recommended by people who have used your services. You can also join groups and show your knowledge there. When you participate in a group, you can post a new thread in a discussion or comment on an existing thread. You can create your own discussions, too. Like other forms of social media, LinkedIn works best when you engage with the people to whom you're connected and actively seek new connections.
- ◆ **Keep status information up to date:** LinkedIn recently took on a Facebook-like look. An element that looks much like a Facebook news feed greets you when you visit the LinkedIn Web site, as shown in Figure 1-2. The feed is a wonderful way to see what your connections are up to. You can add your two cents by entering text in the Network Activity section and then clicking Share. Notice also the check box that lets you share the information on Twitter. In case you were wondering, LinkedIn Network Activity messages are limited to 140 characters, just as they are on Twitter.

Figure 1-2:
Find out
what your
connections
have been
up to.



Determining whether LinkedIn is right for you

If you're looking for new retail customers, LinkedIn isn't the place to be. But if you're in one of the following categories, LinkedIn is the place for you:

- ◆ Your company does business with other businesses.
- ◆ You run a service that benefits busy professionals.
- ◆ You network with other professionals in your industry and supporting industries.



Be sure to join a group or follow a company that is a leader in your network to stay informed of the latest news in your industry.

LinkedIn has a wide variety of tools you can use to find other professionals. In fact, you can search for people before you even join LinkedIn, right on the home page, as shown in Figure 1-3. Notice that the entire LinkedIn member directory is available in alphabetical order. Click the link that corresponds to the first letter of the person's last name or, better, type the person's first and last names in the applicable text fields. You can also browse by country.

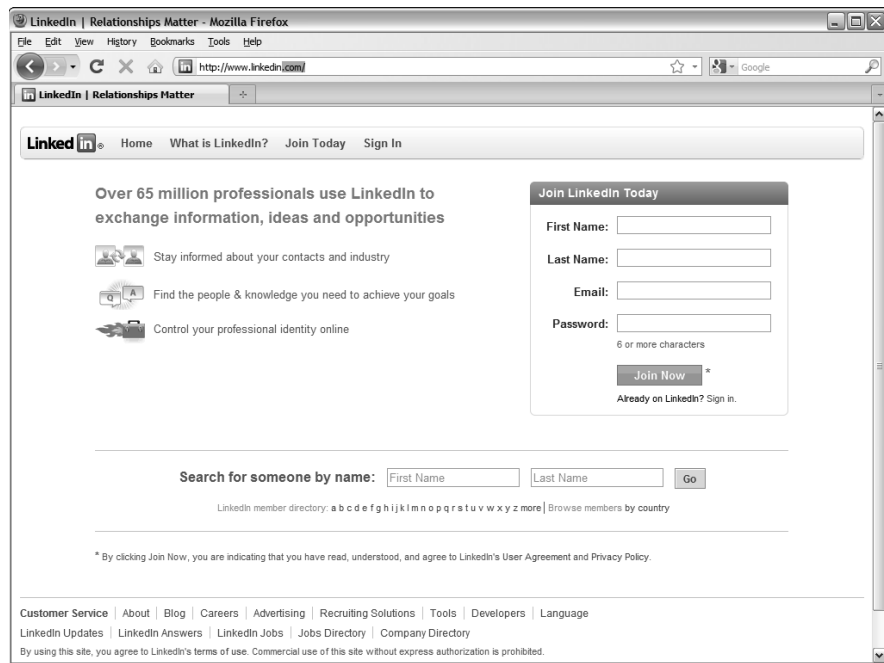


Figure 1-3:
Searching
for people
on LinkedIn.

At LinkedIn, you can control your online professional identity. If you're dealing with businesses in distant locales, the executive officers of potential clients or business partners can find out what they need to know by looking at

your LinkedIn page. You fill the page with compelling information and links to your Web site and other online media.

The activity on LinkedIn isn't quite as frenetic as what you find on Twitter or Facebook. You set up a profile and maintain it. If you join groups, you're notified by e-mail whenever someone posts new information or adds a topic. Many businesspeople maintain identities on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter and manage to be active in all groups without taking too much away from their busy days. If your goals are to network with other professionals and create business opportunities with other businesses, LinkedIn is a good place to be.

Taking a look at LinkedIn demographics

Becoming involved with any type of social media involves a commitment of time and energy. If the typical LinkedIn user doesn't fit the type of people you're trying to network with, you should expend your energy elsewhere. The demographics of LinkedIn at the time this book was written are listed in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1		LinkedIn Demographics	
<i>Demographic</i>		<i>Percentage of Users</i>	
Female		49	
Male		51	
Ages 13 to 17 years old		4	
Ages 18 to 34 years old		27	
Ages 35 to 49 years old		37	
Age 50 or older		31	
Caucasian		82	
African American		6	
Asian		7	
Hispanic		4	
Other		1	
No kids 0 to 17		76	
Kids 0 to 17		24	
0 to \$30,000		12	
\$30 to \$60,000		19	
\$60 to \$100,000		30	
More than \$100,000		39	
No college		26	
College		47	
Graduate school		27	

Setting Up a LinkedIn Account

If you've decided that LinkedIn is a community to which you want to belong, all you need to do is set up an account. When you set one up, you provide only basic information and then tweak your page and provide the information for your online presence.

To create a LinkedIn account, follow these steps:

1. Launch your favorite Web browser and navigate to www.linkedin.com.

The LinkedIn home page appears (refer to Figure 1-3).

2. Enter your contact information.

It's the usual Web stuff — first name, last name, e-mail address, and unique password (see Figure 1-4).

3. Click Join Now.

The Build Your Profile page appears. Click the link to confirm your e-mail address.

4. Choose an option from the I Am Currently drop-down menu.

The default option is chosen. You can also list yourself as working independently or looking for work or as a business owner or student.

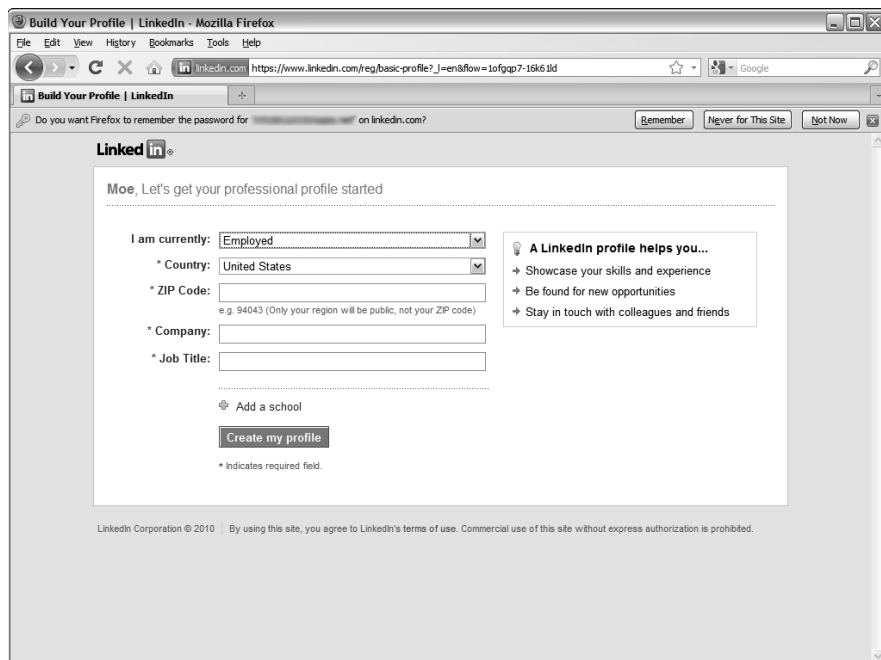


Figure 1-4:
Getting
linked
in with
LinkedIn.

5. Choose a country from the Country drop-down menu.

6. Enter your zip code, company, and job title.

This option is the default if you indicate in Step 4 that you're employed. If you choose one of the other options, enter your zip code and the industry in which you work. If more than one industry applies, choose the one associated with your profile or in which you have the most expertise.

7. (Optional) Click the plus sign (+) icon next to Add a School.

This option is available if you are a student. It displays the College/University text field. You can enter this information now or while setting up your LinkedIn profile.

8. Click the Create My Profile button.

The See Who You Already Know on LinkedIn page appears.

9. Choose an option for an e-mail server.

If your e-mail server is at your company's Web domain, skip this step because it applies only to e-mail servers such as Yahoo! and Gmail. After you choose an e-mail service, you click a button to log in to your e-mail service. LinkedIn compares the e-mail addresses in your address book and then notifies you when one of your correspondents is on LinkedIn.

10. Complete the process of checking to see whether any of your recipients is a member of LinkedIn, or click Skip This Step.

A message appears, asking you to check your e-mail for a confirmation message from LinkedIn.

11. Open your e-mail from LinkedIn and click the link to confirm your e-mail address.

From your confirmation e-mail, you also have the opportunity to

- ◆ **Build your network by finding contacts who are already on LinkedIn:** This is similar to Step 9 in the preceding step list, but in a different dialog box, as shown in Figure 1-5.
- ◆ **Import a contacts file from Apple Mail or Outlook or another format:** The files must have the extension `.csv` (comma-separated values), `.txt` (text file), or `.vcf` (vcard file). You can find out more about importing contacts from your desktop e-mail by clicking the Learn More link.



Figure 1-5:
Building
your
network.

Setting Up Your LinkedIn Profile

After you create a LinkedIn account, you have a bare-bones profile. Your success on LinkedIn depends on how well you set up your profile and how thoroughly you fill out the information. Many people set up a rigid profile that looks like it was written by a robot — no personality at all.

Set up a useful profile that tells visitors to your public profile and your contacts everything they should know about you. Write your profile in a manner similar to creating a 30-second elevator pitch. In other words, make it short, sweet, and to the point but compelling enough to show people what you're all about and what you do.



Look at the profiles of others in your industry to form an idea of what to include in your profile.

To set up your profile, follow these steps:

- 1. Create a new account, as outlined in the earlier section “Setting Up a LinkedIn Account.”**

When you complete the final step, you see a page with options to build your network by way of e-mail (refer to Figure 1-5). Notice the welcome message followed by your name at the top of the page.

2. Click your name.

Your profile page appears, as shown in Figure 1-6. It's blank except for the titles for the information you provide.

3. Click Add Photo.

The Upload a Photo page appears. Click Browse, navigate to the image, and then click Upload Photo. You can upload a GIF, JPG, or PNG file. The file size limit is 4MB. Use a professional-looking photo, preferably a head-and-shoulders portrait on a plain background.

4. Fill in the What Are You Working On text field.

In this brief description of your current project, you're telling your connections, in essence, what you're doing in regard to your business. You can update this section as often as you want, and this information appears in the Network Activity section, along with other updates from people you're connected to.

5. Add your employment information and click the Save Changes button.

Click the Current link to enter information about your current position or the Past link to enter information about your previous positions. You can add as many past positions as you want. However, try to limit this section to your current position and the past two previous positions.

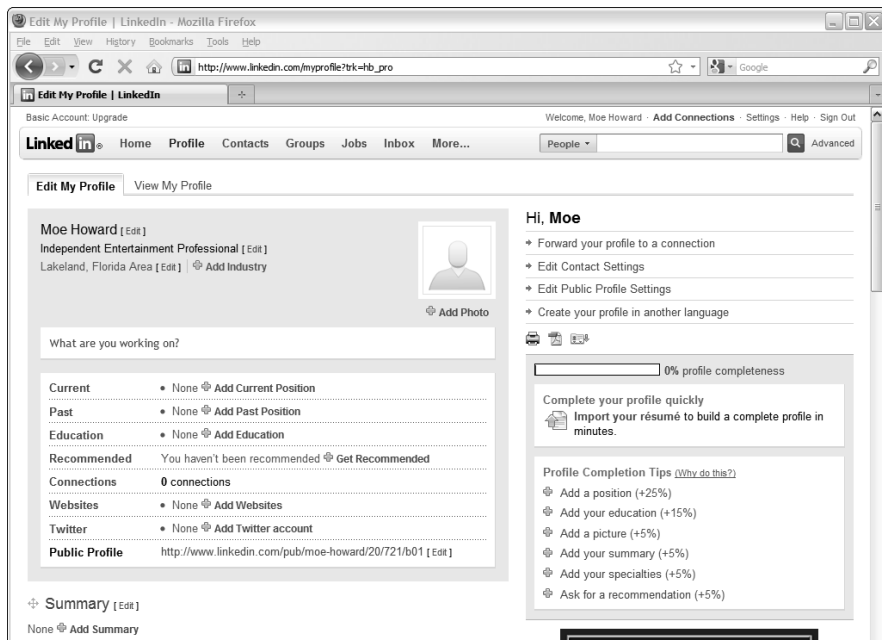


Figure 1-6:
Setting up
your profile.

6. Click Add Education.

The Add Education tab appears, as shown in Figure 1-7.

7. Enter the required information and click the Save Changes button.

If you joined any societies while in school or did something special, be sure to note them in the Activities and Societies section. If you achieved any outstanding recognition, such as making the dean's list or if you received any awards, be sure to note this information in the Additional Notes section.

At this stage, you can find some recommendations. But unless you have some contacts, it's a moot point. We show you how to get recommendations in the "Getting Recommended" section, later in this chapter.

8. Click the Add Websites link.

The Additional Information page appears, as shown in Figure 1-8.

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn 'Add Education' form. The browser window title is 'My Profile: Add Education | LinkedIn - Mozilla Firefox'. The address bar shows the URL: http://www.linkedin.com/myprofile?display=edit&Education=&locale=en_US=&goback=.prf_en%4US. The LinkedIn navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Profile', 'Contacts', 'Groups', 'Jobs', 'Inbox', and 'More...'. The 'Add Education' form contains the following fields:

- Country: United States (dropdown menu)
- State: Choose... (dropdown menu)
- Degree: (text input field)
- Field(s) of Study: (text input field) with examples: English, Physics, Economics
- Dates Attended: (dropdown menu) to (dropdown menu) with a tip: Current students: enter your expected graduation year
- Activities and Societies: (text input field) with a tip: Use commas to separate multiple activities, Examples: Alpha Phi Omega, Chamber Chorale, Debate Team
- Additional Notes: (text input field) with a link: See examples

At the bottom of the form, there is a 'Save Changes' button and a 'Cancel' link.

Figure 1-7:
Adding your
education
information.

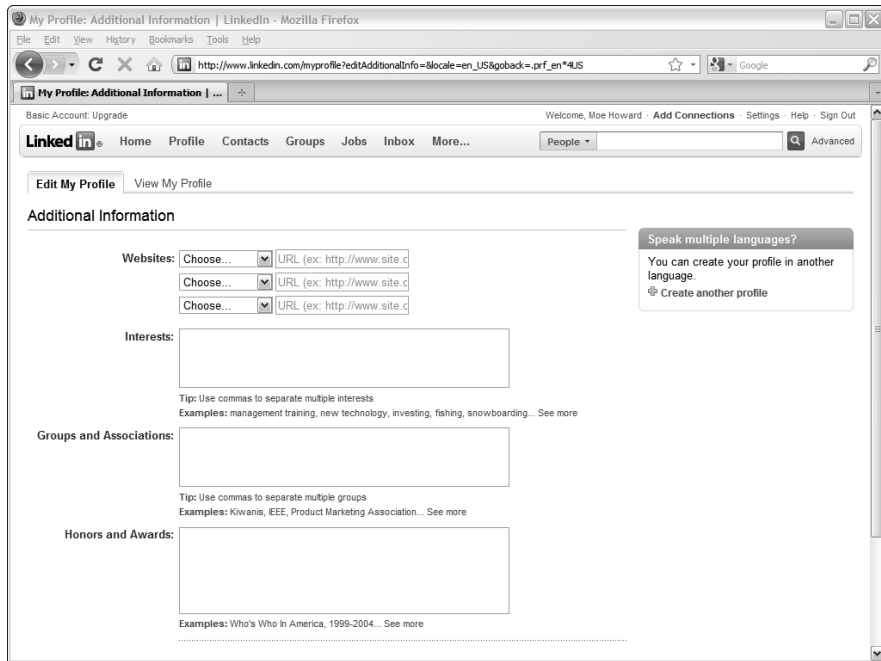


Figure 1-8:
Adding your
Web sites.

9. Choose an option from the Websites drop-down menu.

You can choose from My Website, My Company, My Blog, My RSS Feed, My Portfolio, or Other.

10. Enter the URL of each Web site with which you're associated.

You can add as many as three URLs on your LinkedIn profile. Choose an option for each URL from the drop-down menu, as described in Step 9.

11. Enter information in the Interests text field.

This step tells people the topics you're interested in. Choose topics related to your business or business goals. Refrain from entering any personal interests, such as snowboarding, macramé, or basket-weaving.

12. Enter information in the Groups and Associations text field.

Enter any business groups or associations to which you belong, such as local networking groups or Toastmasters. This information tells more about your business goals and the type of activities you do to support your business.

- 13. Enter information in the Honors and Awards text field and click Save Changes.**

This information concerns honors and awards you've received that are related to your business. For example, if you're a sales professional and you were Salesperson of the Year, include the information here.

- 14. (Optional) To connect Twitter to LinkedIn, click the Add Twitter Account button.**

You're not in LinkedIn any more, Dorothy. You're in the land of Twitter, as shown in Figure 1-9.

- 15. Enter your Twitter username and password and then click Allow.**

You're redirected to LinkedIn, as shown in Figure 1-10.

- 16. Choose an option.**

Choose to share all tweets with your connections or only tweets with the `in` hashtag (`#in`). If your tweets aren't all discreet, the latter option is wonderful. That way, whatever happens on Twitter stays on Twitter.

- 17. Click Save.**

Your Twitter posts are now shared on your profile, as shown in Figure 1-11.

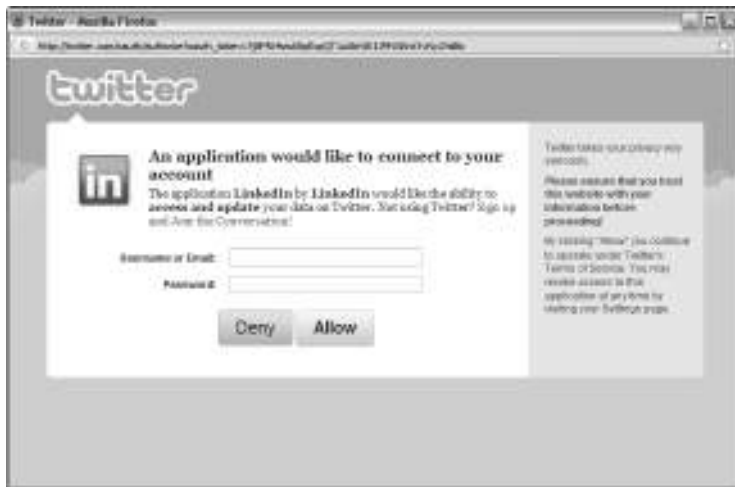


Figure 1-9:
Allowing
Twitter to
link to your
LinkedIn
profile.

Figure 1-10:
Telling
LinkedIn
which
tweets to
post to your
profile.

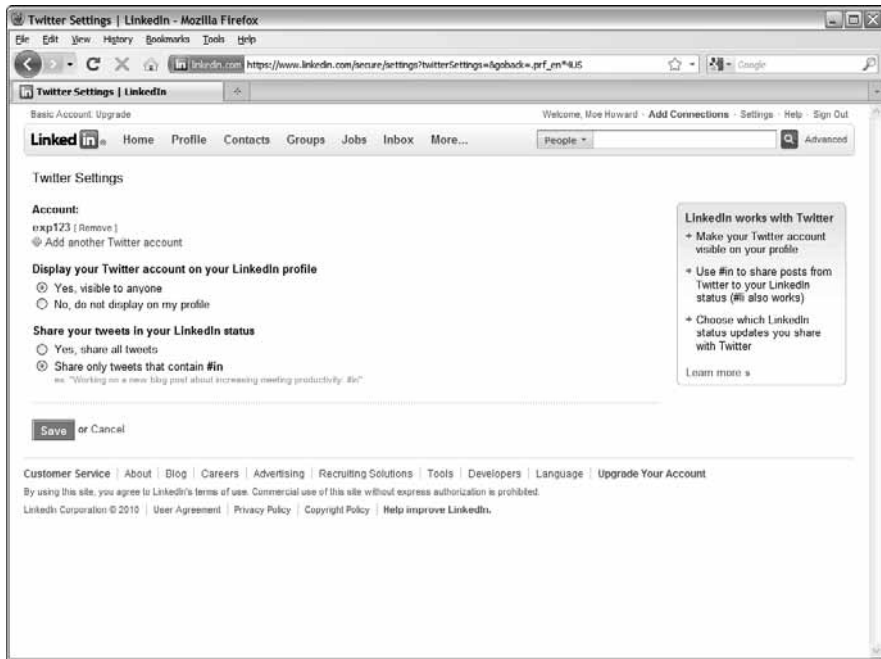


Figure 1-11:
Tweets
now display
on your
LinkedIn
profile.





These steps add lots of meat to your profile, but you can do more to beef up your profile. Click the Edit My Profile link, and scroll to the bottom of the page to add the following information to your page:

- ◆ **Personal Information:** If you want people to be able to get in touch with you, navigate to the Personal Information section, where you can add your phone number, address, instant messaging (IM) information, birth-date, and marital status.
- ◆ **Contact Settings:** Edit this section to tell people on LinkedIn how you want to be contacted, as shown in Figure 1-12. You can specify the type of messages you accept and your opportunity preferences, and leave a bit of advice to those who attempt to contact you. Completing this section alleviates a lot of contact requests from people you may not want to be in contact with.

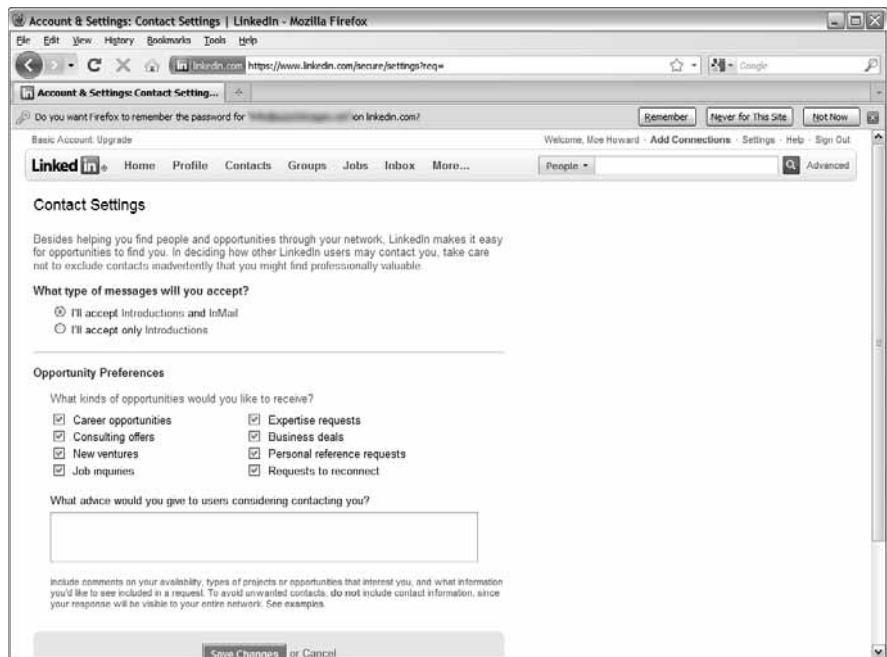


Figure 1-12:
Contact me,
but on my
terms.

- ◆ **Account Settings:** In this area, you have a plethora (one of Doug's favorite words) of options you can change. To change your account settings, click the Settings link to open your Account page, as shown in Figure 1-13. From there, you can
 - Edit your profile
 - Change your account picture

- Manage your recommendations
- Monitor your feed visibility

As your marketing goals and the type of people you want to be in contact with change, you can change your account settings and profiles to match your current needs. Notice also the option to upgrade your account. In essence, you pay LinkedIn for additional features. Explore this topic at your leisure.

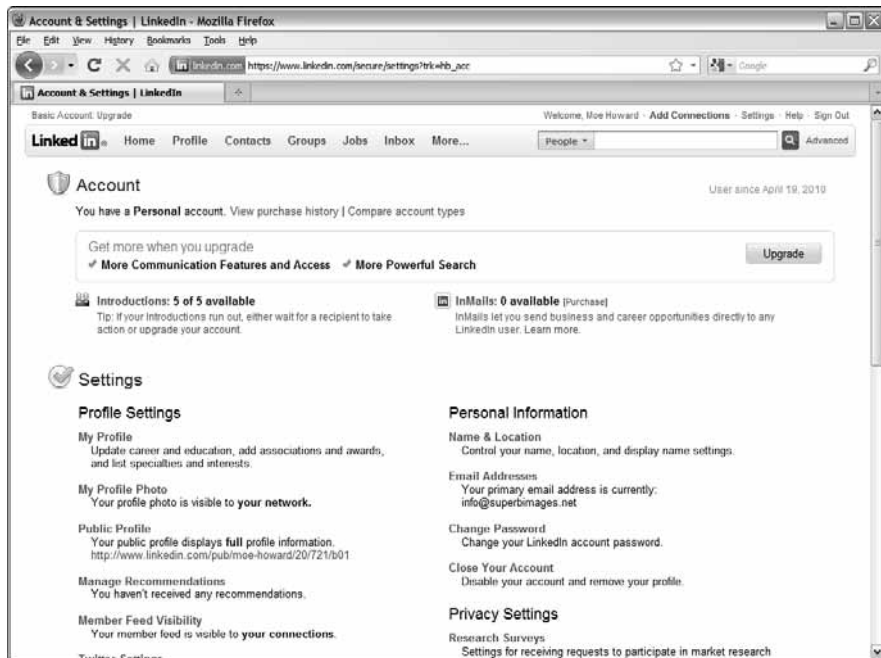


Figure 1-13:
Changing
your
account
settings.

Getting Connected on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is all about getting connected. After you set up your profile and fine-tune it, it's time to start connecting with the type of people whom you can network with, use as mentors, and use as business partners, for example. You can find people you know who are already on LinkedIn, or send an invitation to colleagues to join LinkedIn. LinkedIn calls these people *connections*.

To get connected on LinkedIn, follow these steps:

1. Log in to LinkedIn.

Your profile appears.

2. Choose Add Connections from the Contacts drop-down menu.

The Import Contacts and Invite page appears, as shown in Figure 1-14.

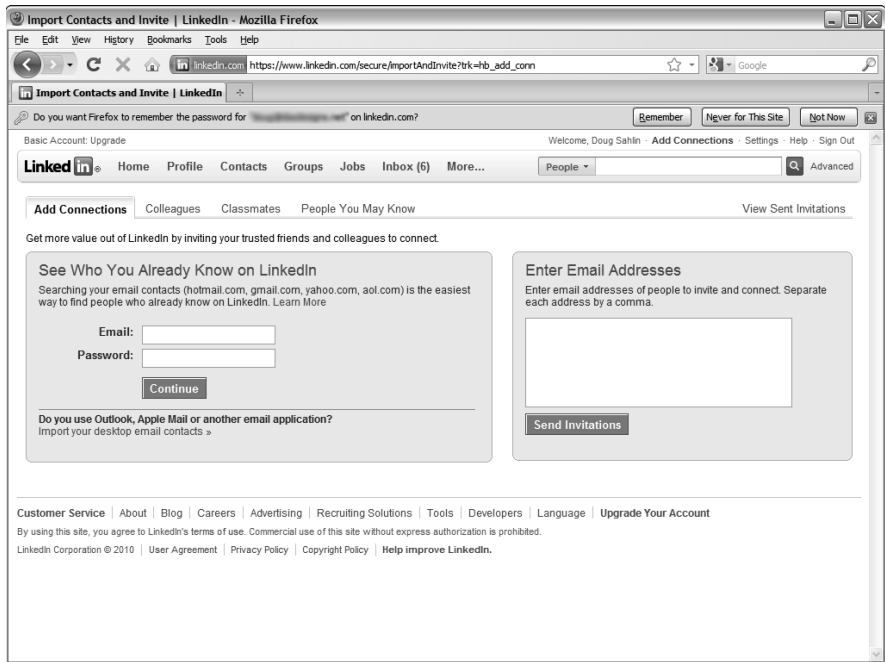


Figure 1-14:
Getting
connected
on LinkedIn.

3. Enter your e-mail address and password. Click Continue.

This option works if you use an e-mail service such as Yahoo! or Gmail. When you click Continue, you see a list of people from your address book who are on LinkedIn. You can pick and choose the ones with whom you want to connect.

4. In the Enter Email Addresses text box, enter the e-mail addresses of the people with whom you want to connect.

Each e-mail address must be separated by a comma.

5. Click the Send Invitations button.

A message appears at the top of the page, telling you that the messages have been sent. Your recipients may not be members of LinkedIn, but they receive an invite nonetheless.

6. Click Colleagues.

The Colleagues page appears. If colleagues from any of the places you've worked at are on LinkedIn, you see them on this page. A button appears for each place you've listed in the Employment section of your profile

as long as people from that company are on LinkedIn. Click the link and follow the prompts to connect with people with whom you've worked.

7. Click the Classmates link.

The Find Past or Present Classmates page appears, as shown in Figure 1-15, with a link from every academic institution you list on your profile.

8. Click a school link.

A list of people who are on LinkedIn and attended your school appears.

9. Click the Invite link next to the person's name to invite him to become a LinkedIn connection.

10. Continue to invite additional contacts from your schools.

11. Click the People You May Know link.

A list of people that LinkedIn thinks you may know appears, using an algorithm that only LinkedIn understands.

12. If you find a person to whom you'd like to connect, click Connect.

The Invite *Person's Name* to connect on LinkedIn dialog appears.

13. Choose an option from the How do you know <person's name>? list.

Your options are: Colleague, Classmate, We've done business together, Friend, Other, or I don't know <person's name>.



Figure 1-15:
Connecting
with former
classmates.

14. (Optional) Fill in the personal note section.

This can be used as a memory jogger if you haven't contacted the person in years.

15. Click Send Invitation.

Your invitation to connect is sent.

Getting Recommended

As you add information to your nearly completed profile, a percentage is listed on the right side of your profile, and a progress bar. As you add more information to your profile, it becomes more complete and becomes an effective business tool for networking with other professionals.

If you add recommendations to your profile, you increase the chances of connecting with like-minded businesspeople. You receive recommendations from people you know and with whom you have done business.

Getting recommendations is a two-step process: Ask for one, and then accept it.

Asking for recommendations

To get recommended, follow these steps:

1. Log in to LinkedIn and then choose Edit My Profile from the Profile drop-down menu.

Your LinkedIn profile appears in Edit mode. At this stage, you have some connections but no recommendations.

2. Click Get Recommended.

The Request Recommendations tab appears, as shown in Figure 1-16. It's your chance to contact the people you've worked with and ask them to toot your horn.

3. Choose the position for which you want to be recommended.

If you've listed multiple positions on your profile, you find them on a drop-down list. You can also add a job or school if they don't appear on the list. Click the applicable link and fill in the form, Norm.

4. Fill in a name in the Your Connections text box or by clicking the LinkedIn icon to the right of the field. Add as many connections as you need and then click Finish.

If you choose the former method, a name appears, or names appear, as you start typing the connection's name. If you choose the latter method,

a list of your connections appears in the Choose Connections dialog box. Click a connection's name to add him to the list. Add as many connections as you need and then click Finish.

5. Accept the default message, or modify it.

The generic message asks for a recommendation. You can modify it if you need to remind a connection of a specific job you did for her.

6. Click Send.

Your invitation is sent to your contact.

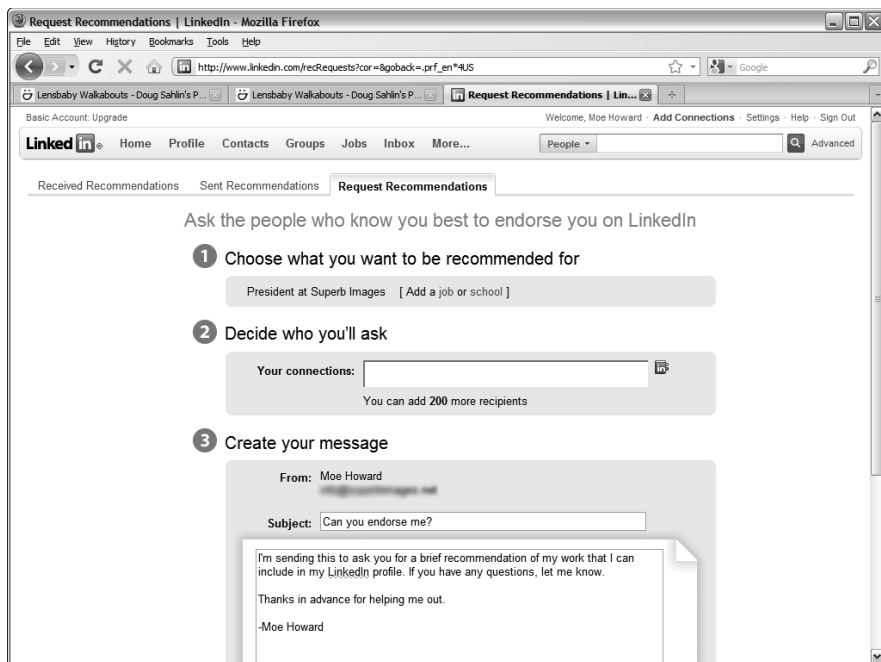


Figure 1-16:
Get recommended.

Accepting recommendations

After you ask for recommendations, you're bound to get one, if not several, recommendations. Recommendations don't automatically show up on your profile. You have to accept them, which gives you some power.



If you receive a lukewarm recommendation, you don't have to accept it. Ask your contact to send you a better one if you know her well.

When a contact sends you a recommendation, you're notified by e-mail. To accept a recommendation, follow these steps:

1. Open the e-mail from LinkedIn that announces your recommendation.

The message tells you which contact sent the recommendation and what it has to say.

2. Click the button at the bottom of the message to display the recommendation.

The recommendation is displayed on your profile.

Getting your first recommendation is exciting and does a lot to flesh out your LinkedIn profile. Get as many recommendations as you can, and make sure that the progress section of your profile shows 100 percent. Then you'll be well on your way to getting the most benefit from your time spent on LinkedIn.