

THEY ARE ALREADY LOOKING FOR YOU

The **LinkedIn** and
CV System for
Nigerian and African
Professionals Who
Are Qualified But
Not Getting Called



STRATEGIC
CV



OPTIMISED
LINKEDIN



DISCOVERED
BY THE RIGHT
OPPORTUNITIES

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Introduction

Why you are here and what this guide will do for you

You bought this guide because something is not working.

Maybe you have been applying for weeks or months with no interview calls. Maybe you are stuck in one role and cannot break into a new sector. Maybe you are employed but know your LinkedIn profile is not doing the work it should.

Whatever brought you here, the answer is the same. You are not visible to the people who are already searching for someone like you.

This guide fixes that. Every chapter gives you something specific to implement. By the time you finish, your LinkedIn profile will be built the way recruiters actually search, and your CV will align with it perfectly.

How to use this guide:

- Have LinkedIn open on your phone or laptop as you read.
- Make each change in real time. Do not read and come back later.
- Use the 7-Day Quick-Start Checklist (your bonus document) if you need to pace yourself.
- Complete every tool in every chapter before moving forward.

Three things this guide does not require:

- LinkedIn Premium. Everything in this guide works on a free LinkedIn account.
- Connections or insider contacts. The system is built on platform optimisation, not networking.
- Starting over. You already have experience and qualifications. This guide teaches you how to make them visible.

One more thing before we start.

This guide will not promise you a specific job or a specific timeline. What it will do is make sure that when a recruiter searches for someone with your background, your profile appears and compels them to reach out. What you do from that point forward is yours to own.

A note on results: The experiences described in this guide are real, but individual. Profile optimisation produces measurable improvements in recruiter visibility for most professionals who implement it correctly. How quickly you see activity, and whether that converts to interviews and offers, depends on your sector, location, level of experience, and the effort you put into each step. The system works when you work it.

Now let us get to work.



Chapter 1

Why You Are Invisible

The four structural mistakes, and a 15-minute audit to find yours

A note before we start

I spent 12 years in the development sector. When the project closed - as development projects always eventually do - I was out. I survived on consultancies that were not consistent, side hustles, and applications. I applied for roles I was qualified for, roles I was overqualified for, and some I had no business applying for. All I got was silence. A few times I got through multiple interview stages and came out with a polite rejection at the end.

What changed was not my CV and not another course. It was how I positioned myself. I eventually got a role I did not even know I was qualified for, in a sector I had never worked in before - the private sector - because I finally understood how to make myself visible to the right people. That is what this guide does.

Before we fix anything, you need to understand what is actually happening when you apply for a job on LinkedIn and hear nothing.

You are not being rejected. You are not being seen at all.

That distinction matters. Fixing a visibility problem is a completely different task from fixing a qualifications problem, and most professionals spend months working on the

wrong one.

Here is what fixing the wrong problem looks like in practice. You rewrite the CV for the fifth time. You submit it to twenty more jobs. Same silence. You attend a webinar on personal branding. You join a LinkedIn challenge. You pay someone to review your documents - they move some bullet points around and send it back. You submit to twenty more jobs. Same silence.

None of that addresses why recruiters are not finding you. Not because the CV is bad. Because your profile is not appearing in their searches in the first place. That is a platform mechanics problem, not a qualifications problem. This chapter shows you where it is. The chapters that follow show you how to fix it.

How Recruiters Actually Work

When a company needs to fill a role, a recruiter opens LinkedIn Recruiter and types in keywords. They search for 'Programme Manager NGO Lagos', 'Finance Officer Development Sector Abuja', 'HR Manager FMCG Nigeria', 'Software Engineer Fintech Lagos'. LinkedIn's algorithm returns a ranked list of profiles that match those terms.

This is not an edge case affecting a small number of people. Analysis of Nigerian professional profiles across multiple sectors shows the same four problems appearing repeatedly. Qualified, experienced professionals - some with 10 or 15 years in their field - sitting entirely outside the results for roles they are fully capable of doing. Not rejected. Not considered. Not seen.

The profiles at the top of those results are not necessarily the most experienced. They are the most findable. They are built the way the algorithm works.

Here is what that looks like from the recruiter's side. A recruiter at a development organisation searches: 'M&E Officer USAID Lagos.' LinkedIn returns a ranked list. The person at position 2 has eight years of M&E experience. The person at position 14 has twelve. The difference is not experience. It is how each profile is structured. Most recruiters do not reach position 14.

The person who never appears in the results at all is not at position 50. They are not in the results. The recruiter does not know they exist.

40x

Complete profiles appear in 40x more recruiter searches than incomplete ones. (LinkedIn Talent Solutions platform data, corroborated by independent research aggregators, 2024-2025)

That is not twice as likely. Not ten times. Forty times more likely to appear in front of a recruiter doing the same search.

The professionals getting found are not more qualified than you. They built their profiles the right way. This guide shows you how.

This system works across sectors - NGO and development, banking and finance, healthcare and public health, technology, education, engineering, HR, and communications - and for professionals at any experience level, whether you have been searching for two weeks or two years.

It also works if you are currently employed and want to be found without your employer knowing. Chapter 2 covers the exact privacy setting that makes you visible to external recruiters while staying completely invisible to your current employer and connections.

It works if you are trying to move into a new sector. Chapter 6 is built specifically for that - the translation table, the bridge headline formula, and the six-step action plan.

And it works if you are based in Nigeria or if you have relocated to the UK, Canada, or the US and your Nigerian experience is not translating into calls. The same platform mechanics apply across all of these situations.

The Four Mistakes Making You Invisible

In going through Nigerian professional profiles across multiple sectors, the same four problems appear repeatedly. Here they are, with what each one is costing you and where each one gets fixed.

#	The Mistake	What It Is Costing You	Where It Gets Fixed
1	Your headline is your job title	Recruiters searching for your exact role may never see your name.	Chapter 2 - The Headline Fix
2	Skills section is thin or untargeted	When a recruiter filters by skill, you do not appear. Full stop.	Chapter 3 - The Skills Ranking System
3	Open To Work is off or misconfigured	Recruiters who would message you directly are not seeing the signal.	Chapter 2 - Settings walkthrough
4	CV and LinkedIn tell different stories	Small inconsistencies get a candidate quietly removed before any interview.	Chapter 5 - The Mirror Rule

Mistake 1 - Your headline is your job title

Your LinkedIn headline is the single most important field for recruiter visibility. It is indexed at five times the weight of every other profile field. If your headline says only 'Programme Manager at Federal Ministry of Health' or 'Relationship Manager at Access

Bank', you are wasting that weighting.

Mistake 2 - Your skills section is thin or untargeted

LinkedIn's search algorithm weights the Skills section heavily when deciding which profiles to surface. Profiles with multiple targeted skill endorsements receive 17 times more views from recruiters than profiles with few or no skills listed. (LinkedIn Talent Solutions data) Most professionals either have fewer than ten skills listed, or they have a random collection from when they set up their profile years ago.

Mistake 3 - Open To Work is off or misconfigured

LinkedIn's own published data shows that professionals with Open To Work correctly activated receive 40% more InMail messages from recruiters. Most people either have it turned off, or they turned it on and left the configuration blank. You can set it to visible to recruiters only, so your current employer does not see it.

Mistake 4 - Your CV and LinkedIn are telling different stories

Recruiters cross-reference your CV and your LinkedIn. It is standard practice. When the dates differ, when an achievement appears on one and not the other, when your job title reads slightly differently - they notice. In a market where a recruiter is evaluating 30 or 40 profiles for one role, even small doubts are enough to move to the next candidate.

Your CV and LinkedIn are not two separate documents. They are one professional story told in two places. They must say exactly the same thing. Chapter 5 - The Mirror Rule - shows you how to align them completely.

Your Quick Win - The 15-Minute LinkedIn Audit

Before you read another chapter, complete the audit below. Open LinkedIn on your phone or laptop and go through your profile section by section. Mark each item PASS or FAIL honestly. This takes 15 to 20 minutes and gives you a precise map of everything that needs fixing before you start.

TOOL 1 - THE LINKEDIN AUDIT CHECKLIST

#	Profile Element + What to Check	PASS	FAIL
01	Profile Photo - Professional, clear face, recent. No selfies, no group shots, no blurry images.	☐	☐
02	Headline - Not Your Job Title - Does NOT just say your current title. Contains keywords, sector, and value you deliver.	☐	☐

#	Profile Element + What to Check	PASS	FAIL
03	About Section - First Two Lines - Opens with a compelling statement, not "I am a professional with X years of experience."	☐	☐
04	About Section - Keywords Present - Contains 6-10 searchable terms that match the roles you are targeting.	☐	☐
05	Open To Work - Activated and Configured - Turned on AND set with specific target job titles. Not left blank. Not turned off.	☐	☐
06	Experience - Results, Not Just Duties - At least one entry uses numbers, outcomes, or impact, not just a list of responsibilities.	☐	☐
07	Skills - 20+ Skills Listed - At least 20 relevant skills listed. Empty or thin skills section = invisible in search.	☐	☐
08	Skills - Top 3 Are Targeted - The first three skills shown are the most relevant to your target role, not random.	☐	☐
09	Certifications Section - Populated - At least one professional certification listed. Not blank.	☐	☐
10	Recommendations - At Least One - At least one written recommendation from a colleague, supervisor, or subordinate.	☐	☐
11	Featured Section - Active - Has at least one item showing your professional work.	☐	☐
12	Contact Info and Location - Complete - Email visible. Location set correctly. Sector/industry field is filled in.	☐	☐
13	Custom Profile URL - URL is linkedin.com/in/yourname, not linkedin.com/in/randomnumbers. Takes 30 seconds to fix.	☐	☐
14	Banner - Not the Default Grey - The background image behind your photo is not the default grey LinkedIn assigns everyone.	☐	☐
15	Profile Completeness - All-Star - LinkedIn shows "All-Star" profile strength (visible under Profile Strength on your dashboard).	☐	☐

My total FAIL count: _____ / 15

Score	What It Means	Where to Start
0-3 Fails	Solid foundation. The chapters ahead will sharpen your visibility significantly.	Start with Chapter 2. Your headline is still your highest-leverage fix regardless of score.
4-8 Fails	Structural visibility problem. Recruiters are searching for you and not finding you.	Prioritise Chapters 2 and 3 first. These produce the fastest measurable result.

Score	What It Means	Where to Start
9-15 Fails	You have been nearly invisible to recruiters. Every fix from here produces an immediate improvement.	Work through every chapter in order. Do not skip. Each fix builds on the previous one.

Every item you marked FAIL is addressed in the chapters that follow. This checklist is your roadmap. The rest of this guide is the route.

What Comes Next - and Why It Matters

You now know which problems you have. The audit gives you the map.

Chapter 2 addresses the highest-impact fix first - your headline. Of all the changes you can make to your LinkedIn profile, the headline produces the fastest and most measurable result. Some professionals see recruiter activity increase within 24 to 48 hours of changing their headline alone.

It takes under 30 minutes to implement. You will have a new headline before you finish the chapter.

Coming Up Next

Chapter 2 - The Headline Fix

How to write the one line that makes recruiters stop scrolling and click your name



Chapter 2

The Headline Fix

How to write the one line that makes recruiters click your name

Your LinkedIn headline is doing one of two things right now.

It is pulling recruiters toward you, or it is pushing them past you. There is no middle ground.

Most Nigerian professionals have a headline that looks like this:

Programme Manager at Federal Ministry of Health

That is a job title. It is not a headline. It tells a recruiter your current employer. It does not tell them what you can do, who you can help, or why they should click your name instead of the next person's.

More importantly, it may not contain the keywords they are actually searching for. Which means your profile does not appear in their results at all.

Why Your Headline Matters More Than Anything Else

When a recruiter runs a LinkedIn search, the algorithm scores every profile against the search query. Your headline is weighted at five times the importance of any other profile field.

That is not a small advantage. Five times. It means if a recruiter searches for 'Programme Manager NGO Lagos' and those words are not in your headline, you are at a significant disadvantage against every profile that has them.

Your headline also follows you everywhere on LinkedIn. It appears next to your name in search results, in every comment you leave, in every connection request you send, in every message thread. It is the first thing anyone reads about you on this platform.

Data from analysis of over 1,600 LinkedIn profiles shows that structured, keyword-rich headlines produce 2.4 times more recruiter replies than basic job-title headlines. (LiGo Social, 2024-2025)

The fix is not complicated. You are rewriting one line. But you need to write it correctly.

Two things worth stating before we start:

- You do not need LinkedIn Premium to implement any of this. Everything in this chapter works on a free account.
- You do not need connections or insider contacts. The headline change is a platform optimisation. It works through the algorithm, not through who you know.

The Formula

Every effective LinkedIn headline for a job seeker follows the same structure. Three parts, separated clearly.

THE HEADLINE FORMULA

[What You Do] | [Who You Serve / Sector] | [Result or Value You Deliver]

Max 220 characters - Front-load your most searchable keyword - Use a pipe | to separate sections

Part 1 - What You Do

Use the industry-standard job title, not your internal company title. If your organisation calls you a 'Field Coordination Associate' but the market calls that role a 'Programme Officer', use Programme Officer. Recruiters search for the term the market uses.

Part 2 - Who You Serve or What Sector

This is the context that places you in the right search category. NGO, Banking, FMCG, Healthcare, Education, Government, Fintech. Be specific. 'Commercial Banking' beats 'financial services'. 'Development Sector' beats 'non-profit'. The more precise you are,

the more relevant your search matches become.

Part 3 - Result or Value You Deliver

This is the part most people skip, and it is the part that stops a recruiter scrolling. A job title tells them what you are called. This part tells them what they get from hiring you. Keep it grounded. What actually happens when you do your job well? Use that. You do not need to exaggerate it.

What to Remove From Your Headline Right Now

Before you write your new headline, remove anything that takes up space without adding search value.

Remove From Your Headline	Use These Instead
Results-oriented	Your actual job title (e.g. Programme Manager)
Team player	Your sector (NGO, Banking, FMCG, Healthcare)
Passionate about	A key skill recruiters search for
Hardworking	A result or outcome you deliver
Motivated	Industry-standard terms from real job postings
Detail-oriented	
Self-starter	
Dynamic professional	
Open to opportunities	
Seeking new challenges	

A recruiter filtering candidates is not searching for 'passionate' or 'results-oriented'. They are searching by job title, sector, and skill. Every word in your headline that does not help them find you is a word wasted.

Before and After - Ten Sector Examples

Find the sector closest to yours below. Use it as a reference when you write your own headline. Your version does not need to match these exactly. Study the pattern.

Sector	BEFORE (what most people write)	AFTER (using the formula)
NGO / Development	Programme Manager at International NGO	Programme Manager WASH & Livelihoods Delivering Donor-Funded Projects Across West Africa
Banking / Finance	Relationship Manager at First Bank	Relationship Manager Commercial Banking Growing SME Loan Portfolios and Reducing Default Risk
Education	Teacher Federal Government College Lagos	Secondary School Administrator Lagos Private Schools Building High-Performance Academic Environments
Healthcare	Public Health Officer at Federal Ministry of Health	Public Health Officer Community Health Programmes Improving Primary Care Access in Underserved Communities
Engineering	Civil Engineer at Julius Berger	Civil Engineer Road and Bridge Infrastructure Delivering High-Value Projects On Time and Within Budget
Communications	Communications Officer Open to work	Communications Specialist NGO and Development Sector Building Donor Narratives That Secure Funding
Tech / Product	Product Manager Seeking new opportunities	Product Manager Fintech and Digital Payments Shipping User-Centric Products That Drive Retention
HR	HR Manager at Dangote Group	HR Manager Manufacturing and FMCG Building Workforce Capability and Reducing Talent Attrition
M&E	M&E Officer Development Sector	M&E Officer USAID and EU-Funded Programmes Designing Accountability Systems That Satisfy Donor Requirements
Career Transition	Programme Manager Looking to transition	Programme Manager Transitioning to Corporate Strategy 8 Years Delivering Complex Multi-Stakeholder Projects

What a fixed headline looks like in practice

NGO Programme Manager, 8 years

Before: Programme Manager at an International NGO

After: Programme Manager | WASH and Livelihoods | Delivering Donor-Funded Programmes Across West Africa

Recruiter search appearances up in 5 days. First inbound message in 9 days.

Senior Banker, 12 years, Lagos

Before: Relationship Manager at First Bank of Nigeria

After: Relationship Manager | Commercial Banking | Growing SME Portfolios in West African Markets

Three recruiter profile views from fintech firms within the first week.

Write Yours Now

Use the worksheet below. Work through each step in order. Do not skip to the end and write it from memory. Steps 1 and 2 make Step 3 much easier.

TOOL 2 - HEADLINE FORMULA WORKSHEET

#	Question	Guidance	Your Answer
Step 1	What is your target job title?	Use the exact title from job postings you want to be found for. Not your internal company title.	
Step 2	What sector or industry do you work in?	NGO, Banking, FMCG, Healthcare, Education, Tech, Government. Be specific.	
Step 3	What result or value do you deliver?	What does your employer or client actually get from your work? Keep it concrete.	
Step 4	Draft your headline using the formula	[Step 1] [Step 2] [Step 3] - under 220 characters.	
Step 5	Check your character count	Paste into any free online character counter. Front-load your most searchable keyword.	

Before you save your headline, run through this quickly:

- Read it out loud. If it sounds robotic, simplify it.
- Check it is under 220 characters. Under 120 is better for mobile.
- Make sure your most important keyword appears in the first half.
- Ask yourself: if a recruiter searched for my job title in my sector, would this headline show up in their results?

Write a strong headline and post it today. A good headline working now is better than a perfect one sitting in a draft for another week.

Configure Open To Work Correctly

While your profile is open, do this next. It takes five minutes. Go to your LinkedIn profile. Click the 'Open to' button below your headline. Select 'Finding a new job'. A configuration panel will appear. Fill in every field.

OPEN TO WORK - CONFIGURATION GUIDE

Setting	What to Enter and Why
Job titles	Add 3 to 5 specific titles you are targeting. Use exact terms: 'Programme Manager', 'M&E Officer', 'Communications Specialist'. Not 'Any role'.
Job locations	Add cities or countries where you want to work. Include remote if relevant. Leaving this blank limits your search match rate.
Job types	Select Full-time, Part-time, Contract as appropriate. Leaving all boxes blank reduces your matches.
Start date	Select 'Immediately' unless you genuinely have a notice period. Recruiters filter by availability.
Visibility	Select 'Recruiters only' if currently employed. This hides the Open To Work badge from your network while still appearing in recruiter search tools.

LinkedIn's own data shows profiles with Open To Work correctly configured receive 40% more InMail messages from recruiters. Fill in every field. Do not leave any blank.

Currently employed and do not want your employer to see it? Set Visibility to 'Recruiters only'. Your connections will not see the badge. Recruiters using LinkedIn Recruiter tools will still find you.

Before You Continue

Confirm these three things are done before moving to Chapter 3:

- Headline rewritten using the formula. Job title, sector, value. No generic phrases.
- All filler words removed. No 'seeking', 'passionate', 'results-oriented'.
- Open To Work activated with every configuration field filled in.

If any of these are still pending, stop and fix them before moving forward. Chapter 3 builds on your headline directly. The skills you rank in the next chapter need to align with the keywords you have established in this one.

Coming Up Next

Chapter 3 - The Skills Ranking System

How to tell LinkedIn's algorithm exactly who to show you to



Chapter 3

The Skills Ranking System

How to tell LinkedIn's algorithm exactly who to show you to

Your Skills section is not a list of things you can do.

It is a search filter. When a recruiter runs a search and adds a skill as a filter, LinkedIn returns only the profiles that have that skill listed. If the skill is not there, you do not appear. Full stop.

Most professionals either have too few skills listed, or they have a random collection that does not match what recruiters in their sector are actually searching for. Both produce the same result: LinkedIn does not know who to show your profile to.

Profiles with multiple targeted skill endorsements receive 17 times more views from recruiters than profiles with few or no skills listed. (LinkedIn Talent Solutions data)

Seventeen times more views. That is the gap between a thin skills section and a properly built one.

How LinkedIn Uses Your Skills

LinkedIn's algorithm treats your Skills section as a set of search tags. When a recruiter filters for 'M&E Officer' with the skill 'Monitoring and Evaluation', LinkedIn scans every

profile and returns only those that have that exact skill listed.

The order of your skills also matters. Your top three skills appear most prominently on your profile and carry the most weight in the algorithm's matching process.

LinkedIn allows you to list up to 50 skills. Most people have fewer than ten. The professionals showing up in recruiter searches have 30, 40, sometimes all 50 filled in, with their most critical skills ranked to the top.

If you have fewer than 20 skills listed right now, you have a significant visibility gap. The sector skill lists below will help you fill it correctly.

The Three-Step Ranking Method

Before you look at the skill lists below, understand the method. This is how you build a skills section that actually works.

Step 1 - Research what recruiters are searching for

Open LinkedIn Jobs. Search for your target job title and sector. Open five to ten real job postings and read them carefully. Write down every skill, tool, qualification, or competency that appears across those postings. The skills that show up in four out of five postings are your priority keywords.

Step 2 - Match your skills to that list

Go to your current LinkedIn Skills section. Cross-check it against the list you just built from the job postings. Note what is missing. Note what is there but irrelevant to your target role. Note what is buried too low.

Step 3 - Rebuild and reorder

Add every missing skill that is genuinely relevant to your target role. Remove skills that are not relevant. Then manually reorder your top three skills to match the highest-frequency terms from your research. To reorder, go to your profile, scroll to Skills, click the pencil icon, and drag skills into the order you want.

You do not need to be an expert in every skill you list. If it is genuinely part of your work experience, list it. The skill list reflects your professional range, not your qualification level in each area.

Skill Lists by Sector

Below are skill lists for eight major sectors. Find yours and use it to fill gaps in your profile. These are drawn from analysis of real job postings and recruiter search patterns in the Nigerian and African professional context.

NGO / Development

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| - Programme Management | - Livelihoods |
| - Project Management | - Humanitarian Response |
| - M&E; (Monitoring & Evaluation) | - Donor Reporting |
| - Proposal Writing | - Logical Framework (LogFrame) |
| - Grant Management | - Results-Based Management |
| - Budget Management | - Community Mobilisation |
| - Stakeholder Engagement | - USAID Compliance |
| - Capacity Building | - EU Funded Projects |
| - Report Writing | - Data Collection |
| - WASH | - Field Coordination |
-

Banking / Finance

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Relationship Management | - Financial Reporting |
| - Credit Analysis | - IFRS |
| - Financial Modelling | - Customer Acquisition |
| - Risk Management | - Business Development |
| - Loan Portfolio Management | - SME Banking |
| - KYC / AML Compliance | - Investment Analysis |
| - Commercial Banking | - Budget Forecasting |
| - Retail Banking | - Excel / Financial Tools |
| - Trade Finance | - Regulatory Compliance |
| - Treasury Management | - Audit and Internal Controls |
-

Healthcare / Public Health

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - Public Health | - HIV/AIDS Programming |
| - Community Health | - Malaria Control |
| - Health Programme Management | - Nutrition Programming |
| - Epidemiology | - Health Data Analysis |
| - Health Systems Strengthening | - HMIS |
| - Clinical Research | - Policy Development |
| - Patient Management | - Behaviour Change Communication |
| - Health Education | - Primary Healthcare |
| - Disease Surveillance | - Emergency Health Response |
| - Maternal and Child Health | - Laboratory Management |
-

Education

- Curriculum Development
 - Classroom Management
 - Lesson Planning
 - Educational Administration
 - School Management
 - Student Assessment
 - Training Facilitation
 - Instructional Design
 - E-Learning
 - Education Policy
 - Teacher Training
 - Learning and Development
 - Performance Management
 - Academic Advising
 - Special Education
 - STEM Education
 - Literacy and Numeracy
 - Education Data
 - Parent Engagement
 - School Improvement Planning
-

Communications / Media

- Communications Strategy
 - Content Writing
 - Copywriting
 - Media Relations
 - Public Relations
 - Social Media Management
 - Brand Management
 - Speechwriting
 - Report Writing
 - Donor Communications
 - Internal Communications
 - Crisis Communications
 - Photography
 - Video Production
 - Graphic Design
 - Website Management
 - Newsletter Production
 - Press Release Writing
 - Advocacy Communications
 - Community Engagement
-

Engineering / Construction

- Civil Engineering
 - Structural Engineering
 - Project Planning
 - AutoCAD
 - Site Supervision
 - Construction Management
 - Infrastructure Development
 - Road Construction
 - Water Supply Systems
 - Quantity Surveying
 - Procurement
 - Health and Safety (HSE)
 - Contract Management
 - Environmental Impact Assessment
 - Geotechnical Engineering
 - Quality Assurance
 - Technical Drawing
 - Cost Estimation
 - Building Information Modelling (BIM)
 - Project Scheduling
-

HR / People Management

- Talent Acquisition
- Recruitment
- Organisational Development
- HRIS

- Onboarding
- Performance Management
- Employee Relations
- HR Policy Development
- Training and Development
- Compensation and Benefits
- Payroll Management
- Succession Planning
- Labour Law / Employment Law
- Conflict Resolution
- Culture Building
- Workforce Planning
- HR Analytics
- Job Evaluation
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Change Management

Tech / Product

- Product Management
- Agile Methodology
- Scrum
- User Research
- Product Roadmap
- Stakeholder Management
- Data Analysis
- SQL
- Python
- UI/UX Design
- Software Development
- API Integration
- Fintech
- Mobile App Development
- Cloud Computing
- Project Management
- Business Analysis
- Technical Writing
- A/B Testing
- KPI Tracking

The Skills Ranking Worksheet

Now apply the three-step method to your own profile. Work through each step below before moving to the next chapter.

TOOL 3 - THE SKILLS RANKING WORKSHEET

#	Task	How to Do It	Do ne ?
Step 1	Open 5 to 10 job postings for your target role	Go to LinkedIn Jobs. Search your target title and sector. Open real postings. Look for patterns in what they ask for.	[]
Step 2	List every skill mentioned across those postings	Write down every skill, tool, or competency that appears. Do not filter yet. Just collect them all.	[]
Step 3	Tally which skills appear most frequently	The skills that show up in 4 out of 5 postings are your priority keywords - what recruiters in your sector are actively searching for right now.	[]

#	Task	How to Do It	Do ne ?
Step 4	Cross-check against your current profile	Go to your LinkedIn Skills section. Which high-frequency skills are already there? Which are missing? Which are listed but buried low?	[]
Step 5	Add missing skills and reorder	Add every relevant skill that is missing. Then reorder your top 3 to match the highest-frequency skills from your research.	[]
Step 6	Add up to 50 skills total	LinkedIn allows 50 skills. Use as many as are genuinely relevant. Do not pad with irrelevant entries.	[]

If you are transitioning sectors, build two lists: one based on your current sector and one based on your target sector. Include skills from both. LinkedIn's algorithm can match you to both, which increases your range of recruiter visibility during a transition period.

Getting Your Skills Endorsed

A skill listed without any endorsements carries less algorithmic weight than a skill with endorsements. This does not mean you need hundreds of endorsements. Even a few from credible connections make a visible difference.

The straightforward way to get endorsements is to give them first. Go to the profiles of two or three former colleagues and endorse the skills they actually used in your work together. Most people endorse back.

Example message: "Hi [name], I am updating my LinkedIn profile and working on getting some skill endorsements. Would you be willing to endorse me for [specific skill]? Happy to return the favour for anything on your profile."

Do not ask everyone at once. Start with three to five people. Endorsements that arrive in a cluster on the same day can appear coordinated. Spread your requests over a week or two.

Before You Continue

- You have researched job postings and identified the high-frequency skills for your target role.
- You have added all missing relevant skills to your profile.
- Your top three skills are the most searchable ones for your target sector.

- You have at least 20 skills listed in total.
- You have sent endorsement requests to at least three former colleagues.

Coming Up Next

Chapter 4 - The Recommendation Blueprint

How to get the right people to say the right things about you



Chapter 4

The Recommendation Blueprint

How to get the right people to say the right things about you

Recruiters read what you write about yourself. Then they look for confirmation from someone else.

That is what recommendations are for. A well-written one from a former supervisor or colleague tells a recruiter things your own profile cannot - because it comes from someone who watched you work.

Most Nigerian professionals either have no recommendations, or they have a couple of vague ones that add nothing. Look at the difference:

Weak	Strong
<i>"Aisha is a dedicated professional and a great team player. I highly recommend her."</i>	<i>"Aisha coordinated a three-state WASH programme across 12 field officers and delivered all donor reports on time during one of the most difficult funding periods our organisation had faced. I would not hesitate to work with her again."</i>

The weak one could describe anyone. The strong one describes a specific person in a specific situation with a specific outcome. That is what a recruiter needs to see.

Your job in this chapter is to get at least three of the strong kind. The templates and tracker below make it straightforward.

Who to Ask

Aim for a minimum of three recommendations across different relationship types.

Who	Weight	What to Ask Them to Focus On
Supervisor / Line Manager	Highest	Delivery, results, how you worked under pressure. A supervisor can describe what you actually produced, not just what you were supposed to do.
Colleague / Peer	Strong	How you worked with others day to day. Reliability, communication, how you handled the hard moments in a shared project.
Subordinate / Team Member	Strong	Your management and mentorship style. If you lead or train people, this perspective carries real weight. Most professionals overlook it.
Client / External Partner	High	How you managed relationships outside your own team. Particularly useful if your role involves stakeholders, donors, or partner organisations.

Two strong recommendations are better than five generic ones. Start with two or three people you are confident will write something useful. You can build up over time.

How to Ask

The reason most professionals have no recommendations is simple: they never asked. And when they do ask, they leave the person with no guidance on what to write.

The templates below fix both problems. They are written in plain, direct language. Adapt the bracketed sections to your own situation before sending.

Template 1 - Former Supervisor

MESSAGE

Hi [Name],

Hope you are doing well. I am updating my LinkedIn profile and wanted to ask if you would be willing to write a short recommendation for me.

You saw my work on [specific project or period] firsthand, and I think your perspective would carry real weight.

If it helps to have a focus, I would love for you to mention [one or two specifics, e.g. how I managed the field team / the way I handled donor reporting]. But please write it in your own words.

Happy to return the favour whenever you need one.

[Your name]

Template 2 - Former Colleague

MESSAGE

Hi [Name],

How are you? I am refreshing my LinkedIn and building up my recommendations section.

We worked closely together on [project / at organisation], and your perspective on what that work actually involved would be valuable. Would you be willing to write something short? Even three or four sentences is enough.

A focus on [e.g. how we handled the M&E; process / my contribution to the stakeholder coordination] would be ideal.

Happy to write one for you in return.

[Your name]

Template 3 - Former Subordinate or Team Member

MESSAGE

Hi [Name],

I hope things are going well with you. I am working on my LinkedIn profile and wanted to ask if you would be comfortable writing a short recommendation for me.

You were part of the team I managed during [project or period], and your experience of working with me would be a genuine reflection of how I work.

No pressure at all. If you are happy to, something around [e.g. how I supported the team / the way I ran our check-ins] would be really meaningful.

Thank you.

[Your name]

Template 4 - Client or External Partner

MESSAGE

Hi [Name],

I hope you are well. I am updating my LinkedIn profile and building up my recommendations section.

We worked together on [project / partnership / contract period], and your perspective on how I managed that relationship would carry real weight coming from someone outside my own organisation.

If you are willing to write something short, a focus on [e.g. how I handled the reporting / the quality of our communication] would be ideal. Even three or four sentences is enough.

No obligation at all, and happy to return the favour if ever useful.

[Your name]

Follow-Up (Send After 10 Days If No Response)

FOLLOW-UP

Hi [Name],

Just following up on my earlier message about a LinkedIn recommendation. No pressure at all if now is not a good time.

If you are willing but have not had the chance, even two or three sentences about our time working on [project] would be helpful.

Thanks either way.

[Your name]

Send the follow-up once. If there is still no response, move on. Do not send a third message.

When the Recommendation Arrives

Read it before you accept it. LinkedIn lets you review a recommendation before it goes live. You can accept it or request a revision.

If it is vague, reply and ask politely if they would be willing to add a specific detail. Most people are happy to adjust when you give them a clear steer.

Example revision request: "Thank you so much for writing this - I really appreciate it. Would you be willing to add one specific detail, for example the name of the project we worked on together or one outcome you observed? Even a single sentence would make it much stronger."

Do not publish a weak recommendation out of politeness. A generic statement on your profile signals that the best someone can say about you is not very much. Two strong ones are worth more than five forgettable ones.

Once you accept a recommendation, write one back for that person promptly. Keep it specific, keep it honest, and keep it to three to five sentences.

Your Recommendation Tracker

Use this table to track who you have contacted, what skills you asked them to focus on, and where each request stands.

TOOL 4 - RECOMMENDATION REQUEST TRACKER

Name	Relationship	Skills / Focus to Request	Sent	Received
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
			☐	☐

Get three requests out today. Recommendations take time to arrive. The sooner you send, the sooner your profile starts showing social proof to recruiters.

Before You Continue

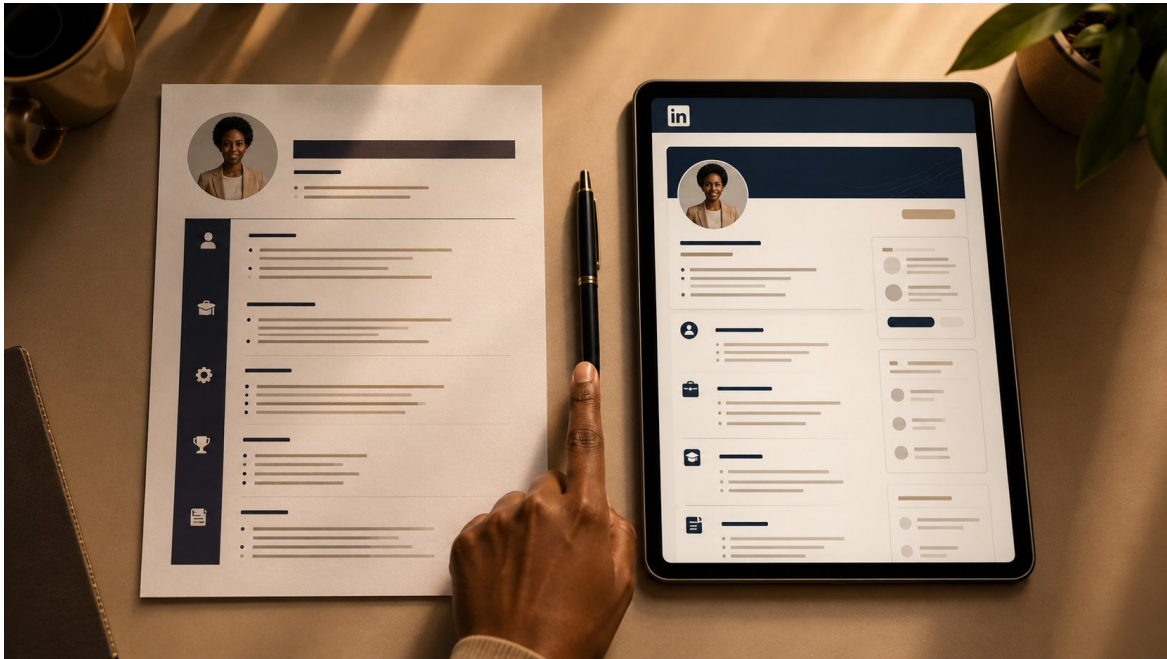
- You have identified at least three people to ask for recommendations.
- Requests have been sent using the templates above.
- Your tracker is filled in.
- You have written at least one recommendation for a former colleague.

While you wait for recommendations to arrive, do not sit idle. Chapter 5 is where most professionals discover a credibility problem they had no idea existed. You have a CV. You have a LinkedIn profile. In most cases they are saying slightly different things. Chapter 5 shows you how to find every mismatch and fix it.

Coming Up Next

Chapter 5 - The Mirror Rule

Why your LinkedIn and CV must tell exactly the same story



Chapter 5

The Mirror Rule

Why your LinkedIn and CV must tell exactly the same story

Recruiters look at your LinkedIn. Then they pull up your CV.

They are checking whether the two say the same thing. If they do not, the candidate gets questioned or quietly removed from consideration. This happens before any interview, often before any phone call.

Most professionals built their LinkedIn years ago and have been updating only their CV since. Over time the two drift apart. Small differences in dates, titles, or missing achievements add up.

This chapter walks you through the alignment check, shows you how to write experience entries that hold a recruiter's attention, and covers how to handle project closeouts and career transitions on both documents.

Run the Alignment Check First

Open your CV and your LinkedIn profile side by side. Work through the checklist below. Mark each element as aligned or not. Fix anything that does not match before continuing to the next chapter.

This takes 20 to 30 minutes. It is the most direct credibility fix in this entire guide.

TOOL 5A - THE MIRROR RULE ALIGNMENT CHECKLIST

Element	What to Check	Why It Matters	Aligned?
Job Titles	Each role reads with the exact same title on both. If LinkedIn says Senior Programme Officer, your CV says the same.	Mismatched titles raise questions about which role you actually held.	☐
Employment Dates	Start and end months match on both. If LinkedIn shows Jan 2019 to Mar 2022, your CV shows Jan 2019 to Mar 2022.	Date differences between documents read as concealment, even when innocent.	☐
Organisation Names	Names are consistent. Both say United Nations Development Programme, or both say UNDP. Not one each.	Inconsistency looks careless. Pick one version and use it everywhere.	☐
Key Achievements	A significant result on your CV also appears in the relevant LinkedIn experience entry.	A major result on the CV with no mention on LinkedIn looks invented.	☐
Employment Gaps	Any gap is handled the same way on both documents. Neither glosses over something the other shows.	A gap visible on one document but absent from the other is noticed immediately.	☐
Skills Claimed	Core skills in your CV summary or experience entries appear in your LinkedIn Skills section.	Skills on a CV with no presence on LinkedIn read as padding.	☐
Certifications	Certifications on your CV also appear in the LinkedIn Certifications section with the same name.	A certification on the CV but absent from LinkedIn weakens its credibility.	☐
Current Role Status	If employed, LinkedIn shows an active role. If between roles, LinkedIn reflects this accurately.	Showing a current employer on LinkedIn while your CV shows you have left creates immediate distrust.	☐

If you find mismatches, fix them on both documents at the same time. Do not update one and plan to update the other later. It will not happen.

How to Write Experience Entries That Work

Most CV and LinkedIn experience entries list what a person was supposed to do. They read like the original job description.

Recruiters have read thousands of those. The profiles they remember describe what actually happened in a role: the scale, the context, the result.

You do not need to turn every bullet into a performance report. One or two results-based entries per role is enough to stand out from the majority of profiles in your sector.

One or two results-based entries per role is enough to stand out. You do not need to rewrite every bullet point tonight. Start with your most recent role and work backwards.

Stop writing: Responsible for managing programme activities.

Start writing: Managed programme delivery across three states, coordinating 12 field officers and maintaining 100% donor reporting compliance over 24 months.

The pattern is: verb, context, scale, result.

Start with what you did, not what you were responsible for. Name the specifics. Include at least one number per entry where you genuinely have one.

TOOL 5B - CV AND LINKEDIN BULLET POINT REWRITER

Sector	Before (duties-based)	After (results-based)
NGO / Programme	Responsible for managing programme activities across three states.	Managed programme delivery across three states, coordinating 12 field officers and maintaining 100% donor reporting compliance over 24 months.
Banking / Finance	In charge of relationship management for SME clients.	Managed a portfolio of 47 SME clients, growing the loan book by 18% over 12 months while keeping non-performing loans below the branch average.
Education	Responsible for teaching and curriculum delivery.	Delivered A-Level Economics to three classes of 35 students. 78% achieved grades A to C in the 2023 WAEC examinations.
Healthcare	Worked on community health outreach programmes.	Led community health outreach across five LGAs, reaching 4,200 households and recording a 31% increase in antenatal care attendance over six months.
Communications	Managed social media and communications activities.	Managed all organisational social media channels, growing LinkedIn following from 800 to 4,300 and increasing donor enquiry rate by 22% over eight months.

Sector	Before (duties-based)	After (results-based)
Engineering	Supervised construction activities on road project.	Supervised civil works on a 14km federal road rehabilitation project, delivering within a N2.4bn budget with zero recorded safety incidents over 18 months.
HR	Handled recruitment and HR administration.	Led recruitment for 34 positions in 2023, cutting average time-to-hire from 11 weeks to 6 weeks through a structured competency-based selection process.
M&E	Carried out monitoring and evaluation activities.	Designed the M&E framework for a 3-year USAID-funded project, overseeing data collection from 6,000 beneficiaries. Donor commended quarterly reporting quality.

No numbers available for a particular role? Describe the scope instead. '12 field officers across three states' is not a performance metric, but it tells a recruiter more than 'a team of staff in a programme role'.

Project Closeouts and Career Transitions

In the NGO and development sector, project closeouts are standard. A three-year USAID programme ends. Funding closes. You move on.

The problem is how most professionals record this. They write 'contract ended' or leave the entry trailing off with nothing. Both read as if the person left suddenly with nothing to show.

A closeout entry should show what you delivered before the project ended, not just that you left.

TOOL 5C - PROJECT CLOSEOUT REFRAME GUIDE

Situation	Before (what most people write)	After (how to reframe it)
Fixed-term donor project ended	Programme Manager, XYZ Organisation (Jan 2020 to Dec 2022). Project closed due to end of funding cycle.	Programme Manager, XYZ Organisation (Jan 2020 to Dec 2022). Delivered a 3-year EU-funded WASH programme to completion. All targets met, including 12,000 beneficiaries reached. Full donor financial audit clearance received.

Situation	Before (what most people write)	After (how to reframe it)
Government contract ended	Technical Adviser, Ministry of Health (Mar 2019 to Jun 2021). Contract ended.	Technical Adviser, Ministry of Health (Mar 2019 to Jun 2021). Completed a 2-year technical advisory contract supporting primary healthcare policy rollout across three states. Contract concluded on schedule.
Redundancy or restructure	Senior Finance Officer, ABC NGO (2018 to 2023). Role made redundant due to organisational restructuring.	Senior Finance Officer, ABC NGO (2018 to 2023). Managed a USD 4.2m annual programme budget across five donor portfolios. Role concluded following organisational restructuring.

The same approach applies to redundancy or restructuring. State what you contributed during the role first. Then note that the role concluded. The result goes first; the departure is just context.

Employment Gaps

If you have a gap in employment, record it the same way on both documents. You do not need to over-explain. But you do need to be consistent.

Freelance or consulting work: List it as a role. Name the type of work and the sectors you served.

Caregiving or family leave: "Career break, family responsibilities, 2020 to 2021" is enough.

Study or upskilling: List the course, institution, and dates as you would a qualification.

Job searching: You do not need to list this. A gap with no explanation is fine.

Before You Continue

- Mirror Rule Alignment Checklist completed. Every mismatch corrected on both documents.
- At least one results-based experience entry per role on both LinkedIn and CV.
- Project closeouts rewritten to show delivery, not just departure.
- Employment gaps handled consistently across both documents.
- If transitioning sectors, LinkedIn About section reflects your direction clearly.

At this point your profile tells one consistent, credible story. Chapter 6 is for professionals whose story needs to cross a border - from NGO to corporate, from education to tech, from one industry to another.

Coming Up Next

Chapter 6 - The Career Transition Map

How to break into a new sector without starting from zero



Chapter 6

The Career Transition Map

How to break into a new sector without starting from zero

Most professionals who want to change sectors think the problem is experience. They assume they need to go back to school, take more courses, or start at a junior level in the new field.

Usually the experience is not the problem. The problem is how it is described.

A programme manager who has run multi-country projects, managed million-dollar budgets, and reported to international donors has more relevant experience for a corporate operations role than they realise. The skill set exists. What is missing is the translation.

The Translation Problem

Two professionals can do essentially the same work and describe it in completely different ways. One gets called. The other does not.

In the NGO and development world, you manage programmes. In corporate, you manage projects or operations. In NGO finance, you manage donor portfolios. In commercial finance, you manage cost centres or P&L. The work is structurally similar. The vocabulary is different.

You do not need to pretend you did something you did not. Translate the work you actually did into the vocabulary the target sector uses. Same work. Different words. That is all this is.

Research from the Nigerian labour market shows that 70% of employers report difficulty finding qualified candidates due to skills mismatch - meaning qualified people exist but cannot connect with employers who need them because the language barrier is never crossed. (NBS / SMEDAN workforce survey data, 2024) This table helps you cross it.

TOOL 6A - TRANSFERABLE SKILLS TRANSLATION TABLE

Skill You Already Have	How It Shows in NGO / Development	Corporate / Other Sector Version
Project / Programme Management	Managing donor-funded programmes, field operations, workplans	Project delivery, operations management, cross-functional coordination
Budget and Financial Management	Managing donor budgets, financial reporting, burn-rate monitoring	Cost centre management, financial reporting, P&L accountability
Stakeholder Engagement	Government liaisons, community leaders, donor relations	Client management, board reporting, vendor relations
Report Writing and Documentation	Donor reports, progress reports, project documentation	Board papers, management reports, business cases, proposals
Training and Facilitation	Community training, staff capacity building, workshops	L&D delivery, onboarding, team training, management development
Data Collection and Analysis	Beneficiary data, M&E data, survey design and analysis	Market research, performance data, customer data, business analytics
Team Leadership	Managing field teams, coordinating remote staff	Line management, team performance, people development
Proposal and Bid Writing	Grant proposals, concept notes, donor pitches	Business development proposals, tender bids, contract submissions

A USAID-funded programme budget of USD 3m is directly comparable to managing a USD 3m cost centre in a corporate organisation. Same financial management skill. Different vocabulary. Use the corporate version on LinkedIn and your CV when targeting corporate roles.

Rewrite Your Headline for the Transition

Your LinkedIn headline needs to do two things when you are transitioning: signal where you are coming from and show where you are going.

The bridge headline sits between the two. It acknowledges your background, names your direction, and uses a specific skill or result that makes the connection credible.

TOOL 6B - BRIDGE HEADLINE EXAMPLES

Moving From	Moving To	Bridge Headline
NGO Programme Management	Corporate Strategy / Operations	Programme Manager Transitioning to Corporate Strategy 8 Years Delivering Complex Multi-Stakeholder Projects
NGO Finance	Commercial Finance / Banking	Finance Manager NGO to Commercial Finance Managing Multi-Donor Budgets Across 5 Donor Portfolios
Development Communications	Corporate Communications / PR	Communications Specialist Development Sector to Corporate Building Narratives That Move Audiences and Secure Results
Public Health / NGO Health	Healthcare Management	Public Health Programme Officer Transitioning to Health Systems Management 6 Years Improving Primary Care Access at Scale
M&E / Research	Data Analytics / Business Intelligence	M&E Officer Moving into Data and Business Analytics Designing Data Systems Across 6,000-Beneficiary USAID Programmes
NGO HR	Corporate HR / People and Culture	HR Officer NGO to Corporate People Management Building Workforce Capability Across Multi-Country Organisations

Rewrite Your About Section

Your LinkedIn About section is the one place on your profile where you can speak directly to your transition. Two or three sentences is all you need. State your background clearly. State your target direction clearly. Connect the two.

TOOL 6C - ABOUT SECTION EXAMPLES FOR CAREER TRANSITIONS

Profile Type	About Section Opening (2-3 sentences)
NGO to Corporate Strategy	Eight years managing donor-funded programmes across West Africa, including USAID, EU, and DFID-funded projects. I am now bringing that programme delivery experience into corporate strategy and operations roles where managing complexity, stakeholders, and budgets at scale is what the job requires.

Profile Type	About Section Opening (2-3 sentences)
NGO Finance to Commercial Finance	I have managed multi-donor budgets totalling over USD 12m across a ten-year NGO career in West Africa. I am now moving into commercial finance, where the financial management rigour I built managing international donor portfolios applies directly to managing business budgets in a commercial environment.
Development Comms to Corporate PR	My background is in communications for international NGOs, building donor narratives, managing media relations, and running digital channels across West Africa. I am now transitioning into corporate communications and PR, where the same skills apply to a different audience and a different bottom line.
M&E to Data Analytics	Six years designing monitoring and evaluation frameworks, managing data collection from large beneficiary populations, and turning field data into reports that influenced programme decisions. I am now moving into data analytics and business intelligence roles, where those same skills apply at a commercial scale.

If you are not yet fully transitioning but are open to roles in a new sector, add one sentence at the end of your About section: 'Open to roles in [target sector] where [specific skill] is relevant.'

The Six-Step Transition Action Plan

Work through each step below in order. The steps build on each other. Completing Step 1 makes Step 2 faster.

TOOL 6D - CAREER TRANSITION ACTION PLAN

#	Task	How to Do It	Done
Step 1	Identify 5 to 10 job postings in your target sector	Search LinkedIn Jobs for the role you are moving into. Read the postings carefully. List every skill, tool, and competency that appears.	[]
Step 2	Map your existing experience to that language	Use the transferable skills table as a reference. For each skill you already have, write the version that fits the target sector.	[]
Step 3	Rewrite your LinkedIn headline using the bridge formula	Name your background sector, your target sector or role, and a specific skill or result that connects the two.	[]
Step 4	Rewrite your LinkedIn About section opening	Two to three sentences. Where you have been, where you are going, and what connects the two.	[]

#	Task	How to Do It	Done
Step 5	Update your Skills section for the target sector	Add the skills from your target sector's job postings that you genuinely have. Reorder your top three. Refer back to Chapter 3.	[]
Step 6	Apply the same changes to your CV	Your CV summary and skills section should reflect the transition in the same way as LinkedIn. Run the Mirror Rule check from Chapter 5.	[]

Transitions take time. You will not complete all six steps in one sitting. Work through them over two or three days. The important thing is to finish all six before you start applying to roles in your target sector.

A Note on Age and Seniority

Some professionals worry that transitioning sectors means accepting a junior role or being overlooked because of age. That concern is worth taking seriously, but it is often bigger in your head than it is in practice.

What undermines older or more experienced candidates is not their background. It is profiles that look dated, vague, or misaligned with the target role. A current, specific, well-written profile competes on merit regardless of age.

Update your profile photo if it is more than three years old. A recent, professional photo signals that you are currently active and engaged with your career. It is a small thing that makes a visible difference.

Before You Continue

- Transferable skills identified and renamed using the language of your target sector.
- LinkedIn headline updated with the bridge formula.
- LinkedIn About section updated to reflect your transition direction.
- Experience entries rewritten to lead with transferable results, not sector-specific jargon.
- Skills section updated to include relevant skills from the target sector.
- CV updated to mirror all changes made to LinkedIn.

Coming Up Next

Chapter 7 - Credentials and Community

Certifications, who you follow, and the visibility signals most professionals ignore



Chapter 7

Credentials, Community, and Staying Visible

Certifications, who you follow, how you show up, and the 30-day plan to keep being found

Your profile is built. Your skills are ranked. Your CV and LinkedIn say the same thing.

This chapter covers three things that keep the work going: certifications, your engagement activity on LinkedIn, and a four-week planner to make the maintenance routine manageable.

None of these require significant time. But skipping them means your profile gradually loses the ground it just gained.

Part A - Certifications

When a recruiter searches for a skill and your profile lists it, you appear. When your profile also has a certification in that skill, your listing carries more weight in the search results.

LinkedIn uses certifications as a signal of verified competence. A skill you claim yourself ranks below a skill you have had independently assessed.

If your Skills section says Project Management but you have no project management certification listed, that skill carries less search weight than the same entry on a profile that has a PMP or Prince2 listed. Certifications also function as searchable keywords. When you list Google Project Management Certificate from Coursera, the words Google, Project Management, and Coursera all become searchable text on your profile.

How to List Certifications Correctly

Go to your LinkedIn profile. Scroll to the Licenses and Certifications section. For each certification, fill in every field:

- Name: use the full official name, not an abbreviation.
- Issuing organisation: full name of the body that issued it.
- Issue date: fill this in. A blank date reduces credibility.
- Credential ID: add it if you have one. It allows independent verification.
- Credential URL: if the issuer has an online verification page, link it.

LinkedIn Learning certificates appear on your profile automatically when you complete a course. They are free to earn and immediately searchable. If you have not used LinkedIn Learning, start there.

Certifications Worth Getting

The table below covers certifications relevant to Nigerian and African professionals across key sectors. Several are free or available to audit without paying.

TOOL 7A - CERTIFICATIONS REFERENCE LIST

Certification	Provider	Who It Helps	Where to Find It
Google Digital Skills for Africa	Google / Grow with Google	All sectors. Digital marketing, online tools, professional digital literacy.	learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalskills
LinkedIn Learning Certificates	LinkedIn	Every sector. Certificates appear on your profile automatically when completed.	linkedin.com/learning
Project Management Fundamentals	Google / Coursera (audit free)	All sectors. Highly searchable. Recognised across NGO, corporate, and tech.	coursera.org

Certification	Provider	Who It Helps	Where to Find It
UN System Staff College Courses	UNSSC	NGO and development. Results-based management, humanitarian response, SDGs.	unssc.org
CIPS (Procurement)	Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply	NGO, engineering, corporate operations. Widely recognised procurement credential.	cips.org
ACCA / ICAN (Finance)	ACCA / ICAN Nigeria	Finance and accounting roles across all sectors. Strong in NGO and corporate.	accaglobal.com / icanig.org
Google Data Analytics	Google / Coursera (audit free)	M&E, research, analytics, tech, corporate. Highly searchable.	coursera.org
Prince2 / PMP	AXELOS / PMI	Engineering, corporate, NGO. Among the most searched project management credentials globally.	axelos.com / pmi.org
IELTS / Professional English	British Council / IDP	Diaspora roles and international organisations. Confirms communication standard.	ielts.org
Mental Health First Aid	MHFA International	HR, education, healthcare, NGO. Growing recruiter interest in wellbeing awareness.	mhfainternational.org

Pick one. Begin it this week. A certification in progress is better than nothing listed.

If you are based in the UK, Canada, or the US

Your Nigerian experience is valid. The challenge is that your profile may not be using the language international recruiters search for, and your certifications may not include the ones they recognise.

Credentials that carry the most weight in these markets:

ACCA or ICAN: ACCA is globally recognised in all three markets. Both signal financial rigour that transfers directly.

Prince2 or PMP: Prince2 is heavily used in the UK public and private sector. PMP is the standard in the US and Canada. If you are in project or programme management, having one of these removes a barrier most hiring managers check for.

CIPS: Recognised across NGO, corporate, and government procurement in all three markets. If your background includes procurement, grants, or supply chain, CIPS signals professional-standard training.

IELTS: If your CV shows Nigerian education and you are applying to roles where communication standard matters, IELTS removes doubt before any interview.

Positioning your Nigerian experience: Use international organisation names in full where possible. "UNICEF Nigeria" and "USAID-funded" are recognised in all three markets. Lead with outcomes and numbers - a recruiter in London or Toronto does not know the Nigerian public sector context, but they understand "delivered a USD 2m programme on schedule." Set your location on LinkedIn to where you currently are or where you are actively applying. Recruiters filter by location.

How to Announce a Certification, New Role, or Achievement on LinkedIn

LinkedIn auto-generates notification prompts when you complete a course, add a new role, or update a certification. The default wording is generic. Most people use it exactly as it appears.

The result is a feed full of posts that sound identical: excited, grateful, looking forward, new chapter. They are skipped.

Personal profiles already generate 561% more reach than company pages sharing the same content. (Refine Labs / Sales and Marketing Engineers, 2026). You have an organic reach advantage simply by posting from your own profile. The question is whether your content earns the attention it is being given.

A 2025 analysis of over 621,000 posts found that posts rated high on personal experience and specific detail outperformed generic professional updates by a measurable margin, with comments weighted at 15 times more than likes in the algorithm's feed distribution. (AuthoredUp / Richard van der Blom Algorithm Research, 2025)

Write the announcement yourself. Do not use the auto-generated text. Say something specific about what you did, what you learned, or what the experience actually cost you.

TOOL 7B - HOW TO ANNOUNCE: TEMPLATE VERSION VS HUMAN VERSION

Post Type	The Template Version (what everyone writes)	The Human Version (what gets read)
New Role	Excited to announce that I have joined [Company] as [Title]. Looking forward to this new chapter and the opportunities ahead. Grateful to everyone who supported me on this journey.	After eight months of silence from every application I sent, something changed when I fixed my LinkedIn profile. Three weeks later I had a call I did not expect. I started at [Company] this week as [Title]. If you are job searching right now and hearing nothing, keep going.
Course or Certification	Proud to share that I have completed [Course Name] from [Provider]. This certificate has helped me grow professionally and I am looking forward to applying what I have learned.	Just completed [Course Name] from [Provider]. I took it specifically because [one specific problem it solves]. The section on [one concrete thing] was worth the time alone. If you are in [sector] and have been putting this off, here is the link.
Project Completion	Thrilled to share that our team has successfully completed [Project]. It was a challenging but rewarding experience.	[Project] closed last week. Three years. Five states. Fourteen thousand beneficiaries. The data quality challenges in Year 2 nearly ended us. Here is what we learned and what we would do differently.
Work Anniversary	Today marks [X] years at [Company]. It has been an incredible journey filled with growth, learning, and amazing colleagues.	Four years at [Company] today. In that time: managed my first multi-country project, survived a funding crisis, lost two team members I learned a lot from. What I know now that I did not know then: [one honest, specific insight].

Part B - Who You Follow and How You Engage

LinkedIn's algorithm reads your engagement activity to determine which professional community you belong to. What you follow, what you comment on, and what you share all feed into that assessment.

A profile that presents as a senior programme manager but follows only entertainment accounts and motivational speakers signals a mismatch. Your feed and your profile should reflect the same professional.

The Following Audit

Go to your LinkedIn profile. Click Following. Scroll through. For each account ask: does this strengthen or weaken my professional signal? Remove what does not belong. Add accounts from your target sector.

TOOL 7C - FOLLOWING GUIDE BY SECTOR

Sector	Organisations to Follow	Hashtags
NGO / Development	UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, IRC, Save the Children, Oxfam, MSF, Plan International, Mercy Corps	#GlobalDevelopment, #WASH, #FoodSecurity, #M&E, #Humanitarian
Banking / Finance	CBN, Access Bank, GTBank, Zenith Bank, Standard Chartered Nigeria, KPMG Nigeria, PwC Nigeria	#Banking, #Finance, #FintechNigeria, #IFRS, #NigeriaEconomy
Healthcare	WHO Nigeria, FMOH, NAFDAC, MSF, Clinton Health Access Initiative, Jhpiego, FHI360	#PublicHealth, #GlobalHealth, #HealthSystems, #PrimaryHealthcare
Tech / Product	Andela, Flutterwave, Paystack, Interswitch, Google Nigeria, Microsoft Africa	#TechInAfrica, #Fintech, #ProductManagement, #StartupNigeria
Communications	PRCAN, NUJ, TheCable, Stears, BusinessDay, TechCabal	#Communications, #PR, #ContentStrategy, #MediaNigeria
HR	CIPM Nigeria, SHRM, LinkedIn Talent Solutions, Workforce Group Nigeria	#HumanResources, #TalentAcquisition, #HRNigeria, #PeopleManagement

Commenting vs Posting

You do not need to post content regularly to stay visible. Commenting is enough. When you comment on a post from someone in your sector, your name and headline appear in that thread. Two or three comments per week sustains visible presence.

The comments should be specific. Not a row of emojis or "Great post!" An observation, a question, or a point that builds on what was said.

Part C - The 30-Day Visibility Planner

A profile left alone after the initial build gradually loses search ranking. LinkedIn rewards recency. The planner below keeps your profile active without requiring significant daily effort. Three actions per week. Monday, Wednesday, Friday.

TOOL 7D - THE 30-DAY VISIBILITY PLANNER

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1 - Profile Foundation	Complete LinkedIn Audit Checklist. List every FAIL item.	Rewrite headline using the formula from Chapter 2. Update Open To Work settings.	Rewrite About section. Update current role status if needed.
Week 2 - Skills and Proof	Rebuild Skills section using the ranking method from Chapter 3. Add missing skills from your sector list.	Send recommendation requests to at least three people using the templates from Chapter 4.	Run the Mirror Rule checklist from Chapter 5. Fix every mismatch between CV and LinkedIn.
Week 3 - Credentials and Community	Update your Certifications section. Add any missing credentials. Begin one new certification.	Following audit: remove accounts that do not reflect your target sector. Follow 10 relevant organisations and people.	Leave one specific comment on a post from a professional in your target sector. Not a reaction. An actual observation or question.
Week 4 - Visibility and Presence	Update your Featured section. Add one piece of work, a post, or a link that shows your professional capability.	Write one short LinkedIn post. A professional observation, a lesson from a project, or a practical tip. Three to five sentences.	Review your profile as if you are a recruiter seeing it for the first time. Check for gaps. Update anything that looks dated.

If you worked through Chapters 1 to 6 before reaching this planner, most of Week 1 and Week 2 are already done. Use those weeks to check and confirm rather than rebuild from scratch.

After 30 Days

Once the planner is done, this lighter schedule is enough to keep your profile current.

TOOL 7E - ONGOING MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

When	What to Do
Weekly	Leave two or three specific comments on posts in your sector. Not emoji reactions. A short observation or question that shows you read the post.
Monthly	Check your profile for outdated information. Confirm your top three skills still reflect your target role. Update current role status if anything has changed.
Quarterly	Add new achievements, completed projects, or certifications earned in the last three months. Refresh one or two experience entries if you have new results to show.
After any project	Update your LinkedIn and CV immediately while the details are fresh. Do not wait until you are job searching to recall what you delivered.
After any course	Add the certification to LinkedIn and your CV. Short courses count if they are relevant to your target role.

Before You Continue

- Certifications section updated. All fields filled in. One new certification begun.
- Following audit completed. Irrelevant accounts removed. Ten relevant accounts added.
- 30-Day Planner started.
- Any announcements to make? Write them yourself. Skip the template.

You have completed the full system.

Your profile is now built the way recruiters search. Your CV and LinkedIn say the same thing. Your skills are ranked for your target role. Recommendations are in progress. Certifications are listed. Your engagement reflects your professional direction.

The recruiter messages do not always arrive the same day. Some come in two days. Some take a week. What you have built is a profile that works while you are not watching it.

They are already looking for you. Now they can find you.



The Two Bonus Documents Included With This Guide

- The 7-Day Quick-Start Checklist: a day-by-day schedule for the first week of implementation.
- The Interview Preparation Starter Kit: for when the calls arrive and you need to be ready for the conversation.

The experiences described throughout this guide are real. Profile optimisation produces measurable improvements in recruiter visibility for professionals who implement the steps correctly. How quickly you see results, and whether visibility converts to interviews and offers, depends on your sector, location, experience level, the current hiring environment, and the effort you put into each step. Results are not guaranteed and individual experiences will vary.

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