

Three LinkedIn Missteps to Avoid: How to Effectively Navigate Professional Etiquette on LinkedIn

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As an active user of LinkedIn every day for many years, I have seen a lot of good, bad and ugly practices on the platform. A few of these pesky faux pas continue to show up over and over (I wish I knew why!) – which can undermine the LinkedIn efforts of the individuals who continue to make these mistakes. In this article, I'll explore the three major missteps I see, and what to do instead to make your LinkedIn presence more effective.

1. **The Pitfall of Mass Tagging:** One common mistake is the mass tagging of individuals in posts without their direct relevance or consent. The intention might be to boost engagement or highlight a point, but when done indiscriminately, it can have the opposite effect. Effective tagging should be thoughtful and relevant, aiming to include individuals who are directly related to or interested in the content. The golden rule here is quality over quantity; engaging your network through meaningful content will always be more effective than bombarding them with notifications they didn't sign up for.
2. **The Faux Pas of Liking Your Own Posts:** Liking your own LinkedIn posts may seem like an easy way to boost engagement (PS – it doesn't!), but it can backfire by projecting an image of self-promotion taken too far. This practice can come off as trying too hard—a digital equivalent of patting yourself on the back in public. It's far better to let the strength of your content speak for itself and attract likes and comments organically. It's far better to let the strength of your content speak for itself and attract likes and comments organically. After all, the aim is to spark genuine interest and dialogue among your peers, not just to rack up numbers.
3. **The Dull Edge of Self-Promotion:** LinkedIn is a powerful platform for showcasing achievements and expertise. However, there's a fine line between highlighting your professional milestones and inundating your network with dry, self-promotional content. Continuous self-centered posts can quickly become background noise, losing the attention of your audience. The key to effective LinkedIn content is balance: mix updates about your professional journey with insights, stories and contributions that add value to your industry. Engage your audience with thought-provoking questions, share lessons learned and participate in broader discussions. By diversifying your content, you not only demonstrate your expertise but also contribute to the growth and enrichment of your professional community.

Navigating LinkedIn's professional landscape requires a nuanced understanding of its community norms and best practices. By avoiding these three missteps—mass tagging, liking your own posts and posting self-promotional content—you can ensure that your LinkedIn presence enhances your professional image and fosters genuine connections within your industry. Remember, the most respected voices on LinkedIn are those that add real value and engage with their network in authentic and thoughtful ways.

Key Takeaways to Elevate Your LinkedIn Presence

1. **Selective Tagging:** Use tagging wisely to engage individuals who are genuinely connected to or interested in your content. This keeps your interactions relevant and respectful.
2. **Quality Content Over Self-Likes:** Focus on creating content that naturally attracts engagement from your network. Authentic interest and interaction are more valuable than the illusion of popularity from self-likes.
3. **Diverse and Engaging Content:** Balance showcasing your achievements with sharing insights and participating in industry discussions. This enriches your profile, demonstrating your expertise and contributing to the community.

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