



LINKEDIN PRIVACY GUIDELINES



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But that doesn’t mean your privacy
shouldn’t remain a concern and
something you take efforts to protect. ”

Nigel Cliffe

ValueExchange

LINKEDIN PRIVACY GUIDELINES

LinkedIn is a social platform, of course. But that doesn't mean your privacy shouldn't remain a concern and something you take efforts to protect.

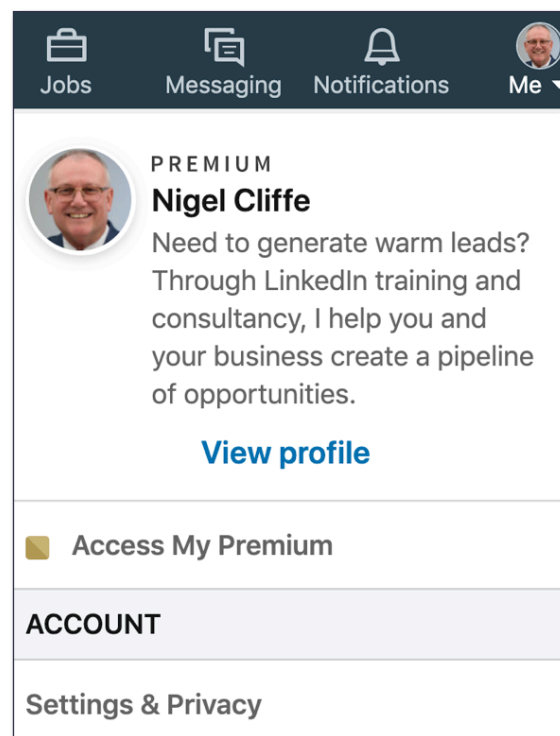
Being open to new relationships and opportunities is the basis for valuable engagement on the platform, but in the process, just how much information should you give away?

This document outlines some key measures you might wish to consider in adding a layer of privacy to your identity.

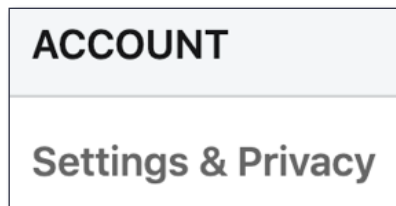
In my mind, at least, there seems to be little down-side to adopting these measures. The upside is you can feel freer to be active and engaged on LinkedIn, knowing you have added a degree of protection to your personal brand.

Many of the suggested changes can be found in Settings & Privacy. For the purpose of this guide, my instructions are meant for edits on the desk top/laptop version of LinkedIn and NOT via the mobile App. (I find it's just easier there!)

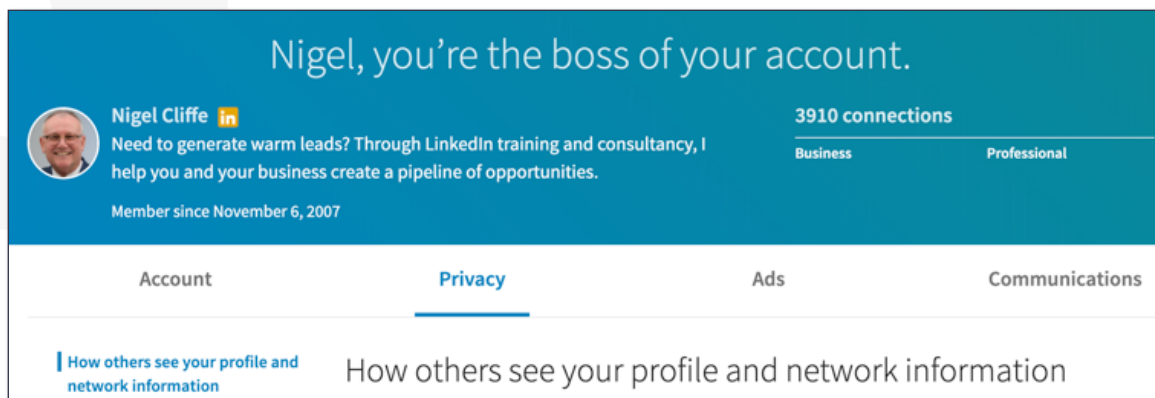
Simply click on 'Me' from the main navigation bar and drop down to Settings & Privacy.



Scroll down to **ACCOUNT**



Click on **Settings & Privacy**



Can I say at this point that there are over 100 settings to consider across the spectrum of Account, Privacy, Ads & Communications. This document cannot possibly cover them all. I recommend you take a little time out to run through all of them. I guarantee it will be worth your time. You don't know which settings you have turned on, or off, if you never take the trouble to look!

This document, however, covers what I believe to be the most important ones.

From here, most of the following recommendations are found in the **Privacy** column.



1. The first item to consider is how your public profile is set.

Edit your public profile

Choose how your profile appears to non-logged in members via search engines or permitted services

It is important to have all the options turned on (or off!) that are particular to your needs. I often find things might be turned off, that you might rather wish were turned on. For example, your profile picture. You have uploaded a picture and think all is good. But guess what, you have its visibility turned off to all but your existing 1st degree connections. I'd rather be visible to everyone to develop trust and can't see any good reason not to have yourself visible too. Make sure this is set appropriately for you.

2.



Edit your custom URL

Personalize the URL for your profile.

www.linkedin.com/in/nigeljcliffe 

While you are in this section, have you personalised your LinkedIn URL?

It acts as your unique LinkedIn identifier. Try adding your own name in the field where a string of letters and numbers exists alongside your name. If your exact name hasn't been taken, you have the option to secure it for yourself! If not, you will have to try a variation of options, such as adding hyphens, adding a middle name initial, etc. When I see a profile which someone has taken the care to personalise, it gives me the impression they know what they are doing on LinkedIn.

Your profile's public
visibility

On 

You must ensure your public visibility is turned to 'On'.



Basic (required)

- ☒ Name, number of connections, industry, and region

Profile Photo

- ☐ Your connections
Only LinkedIn members directly connected to you.
- ☐ Your network
Only LinkedIn members connected up to three degrees away from you.
- ☐ All LinkedIn Members
- ☒ Public
All LinkedIn members, and others who find you via search engines and other services

3. The next question raised is who can see your email address, and for that matter, which one do they see?

I see many people make the mistake of adding a personal email address and keeping that as the Primary email address on LinkedIn. This means that once we are 1st degree connected, and I go to look for your contact details, I get to see your personal email address rather than your business email address. That might make me feel awkward if I wanted to communicate with you about business matters.

I recommend changing this. Add both a personal and a business email address and make your business address your **Primary** one. (This does mean that LinkedIn notifications will also go to that email address...)

Who can see your email address

Choose who can see your email address on your profile

Who can see your email address

Choose who can see your email address on your profile

Who can see **nigel@valueexchange.co.uk** on your profile?

1st and 2nd degree connections ▼

Allow your connections to download your email **nigel@valueexchange.co.uk** in their data export? If no, your primary email address will not be included.

[Learn more](#)

Yes ☒

If someone can see your email address, they will be able to contact you directly. [Learn more](#)

You can control your primary email address in [settings](#).

There is a degree of interpretation about this. I am quite happy to have a high degree of visibility of my email address. It is already on my website and widely available. I also don't mind it being available in a data download (more of that later) but there does remain the risk of being added to a mailing list, despite GDPR. The choice is yours, but just be aware of the decision you take.

#AdvancedTip - I also add my email address in my 'About' section. (Used to be called your LinkedIn Summary - it's the same thing!) This means that people who are not LinkedIn-confident have the opportunity of contacting you off LinkedIn if they choose. Remember here, your LinkedIn contact details are only seen by your 1st degree connections and cannot be shown to anyone else.

4.

Who can see your connections

Choose who can see your list of connections

For me this is a killer question. Possibly the most important one in this whole document. Let me explain. In LinkedIn's default position, your Connections, all of them, are visible and searchable to all of your existing connections. That means that everyone you have accepted a connection with, has access to your trusted network of connections. I don't buy this. Over a long period of time I have developed a valuable network of trusted connections. It acts like my address book. I am not happy to make that data available to anyone. I feel it also protects those connections from unscrupulous activity too. I'd say turn this off, to 'only you'.

Who can see your connections

Choose who can see your list of connections

Members will still be able to see connections who endorse you and connections they share with you. (Don't want your endorsements visible? Just choose to opt out) [Learn more](#)

Only you ▼

Just one point to note here though, in case you are confused. Despite turning this feature off, LinkedIn still displays those connections to whom you are both jointly connected.

5.

Viewers of this profile also viewed

Choose whether or not this feature appears when people view your profile

This is a widely forgotten setting. You know when you visit a person's profile page and LinkedIn presents '**Viewers of this profile also viewed**'? In effect you are presenting, on your own page, people who might be very similar to you. Oftentimes this might consist of people who you could consider as competition to your services. I asked myself why I should present my competition on my own LinkedIn profile page? I prefer to have this feature turned off on my own profile, despite it being very valuable when looking at other people's profiles!

Viewers of this profile also viewed

Choose whether or not this feature appears when people view your profile

Should we display “Viewers of this profile also viewed” box on your Profile page?

No ☐

Make sure, as illustrated above, that you have this setting turned to ‘No’.

6.

Profile viewing options

Choose whether you’re visible or viewing in private mode

One of the key features of LinkedIn is to be able to view each other’s profiles.

In LinkedIn’s default mode, when we review another person’s profile we leave a digital footprint letting the person know we have viewed their profile. For the most part I think this is a good thing. I like to leave a signal on a person’s profile that I have shown interest in them.

However, there are times when I might prefer not to leave a digital footprint on that person’s profile and prefer to view that profile anonymously. This might be when I’m doing industry research or checking out the authenticity of a profile I am uncertain about.


You can quickly edit this section to turn yourself on and off as can be seen below. If I choose to view a profile anonymously I temporarily turn myself off but then remember to turn myself back on when I finish doing my research.

Profile viewing options

Choose whether you're visible or viewing in private mode

Select what others see when you've viewed their profile

Your name and headline




☒

Nigel Cliffe
 Need to generate warm leads? Through LinkedIn training and consultancy, I help you and your business create a pipeline of opportunities.
 United Kingdom | Professional Training & Coaching


Private profile characteristics

☐


 Someone at Squared Online

Private mode

☐


 Anonymous LinkedIn Member

[Close](#)
[Full profile](#)


In the above setting I am **visible**.

Profile viewing options

Choose whether you're visible or viewing in private mode

Select what others see when you've viewed their profile

Your name and headline




☐

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Private profile characteristics

☐


 Someone at Squared Online

Private mode

☒


 Anonymous LinkedIn Member

[Close](#)
[Private mode](#)

In the above setting I am **anonymous**.

(I advise ignoring the middle option as this gives away some detail which might make it possible for the person to establish it was you looking at their profile even when you intended to be anonymous!)

7.

Share job changes, education changes, and work anniversaries from profile

Choose whether your network is notified

There are certain times, when making edits to your profile, that you might like to publicise the change. For example, changing your job role might be something you wish to let your connections know about.

However, there are also times when you might prefer not to share changing your data, such as when you are updating your profile picture or other private details about yourself.

One time I advise you to turn this feature off is when you are making wholesale changes to your profile. I don't think you wish to share every small detail change you make with your connections*, so I prefer to turn this feature off when making multiple corrections to my profile. However in 'every day mode' I am happy to share such changes with my network.

*The algorithm will ultimately determine who gets to see your activity, of all types, so not everyone would get to see these changes, in any event.

8.

Download your data

Download an archive of your account data, posts, connections, and more

Did you know you can implement a data download from LinkedIn?

It is possible to download a tremendous amount of data from the LinkedIn platform. Remember, everything you do on LinkedIn remains on LinkedIn. With this in mind, if you want to maintain a copy of your own data then periodically it is a good idea to download this data to own it yourself. A few options exist from 'Pick and choose' to 'The works'.



Download your data

Download an archive of your account data, posts, connections, and more

Your LinkedIn data belongs to you, and you can download an archive any time or [view the rich media](#) you have uploaded. You can learn more about what data you can export by [visiting our Help Center](#).

☒ **The works:** All of the individual files plus more. [Learn more](#)

☐ **Pick and choose:** Select the data files you're most interested in. [Learn more](#)

☐ Articles

☐ Connections

☐ Imported Contacts

☐ Messages

☐ Invitations

☐ Profile

☐ Recommendations

☐ Registration

Request archive

Your download will be ready in about 24 hours

You have two main options:

- The Works
- Pick and choose

The Works is literally the works - so much data you will find it hard to find anything useful (in my experience).

Pick and choose is possibly the most useful option, allowing you to select: -

- Articles
- Connections
- Imported contacts
- Messages
- Invitations
- Profile
- Recommendations
- Registration

Download your data

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Your LinkedIn data belongs to you, and you can download an archive any time or [view the rich media](#) you have uploaded. You can learn more about what data you can export by [visiting our Help Center](#).

☐ **The works:** All of the individual files plus more. [Learn more](#)

☒ **Pick and choose:** Select the data files you're most interested in. [Learn more](#)

☐ Articles

☒ Connections

☐ Imported Contacts

☐ Messages

☐ Invitations

☐ Profile

☐ Recommendations

☐ Registration

Request archive

Your download will be ready in about 10 mins

#Tip - I'd select a limited number of selections at once - it is easier to file and keep track.

Once you have clicked to request, a link will be sent to your Primary email address for you to click to obtain a download of your requested data.

We will send you an email when your download is ready.

Request pending



Nigel Cliffe



Hi Nigel,

Your LinkedIn data archive fast file is ready for you! You can [download it with this link](#).

This download includes your connections, contacts, recommendations, messages, and profile information. You can learn more about your data archives in our [Help Center](#).

Thanks,
The LinkedIn Team

9.

Manage who can discover your profile from your email address

Choose who can discover your profile if they are not connected to you but have your email address

This may seem fairly innocuous and you may think why not let everyone see my email addresses?

I like to maintain control of who I connect with. By linking the data, behind the scenes, with people who might hold **ANY** of your email addresses you have added to LinkedIn, you are allowing LinkedIn to create a connection based on this data alone. It will certainly influence the 'People you might know' suggestions, but more suspiciously, I have received automated connection requests from people who have not asked for a connection, but who happen to have my email address(es) and who have allowed LinkedIn to connect their own saved email addresses with their body of connections on LinkedIn. LinkedIn call it Sync contacts or Sync calendar. Let me explain this another way:

LinkedIn often sends emails, or displays pop-ups, that warmly invite you to add your contacts, for example from Gmail, to LinkedIn. I'd recommend **never** doing this. I want to keep complete control of my connections on LinkedIn. Someone once sent me a connection request and when I respectfully asked why they might wish to connect with me before accepting their request the reply came back "because LinkedIn told me I knew you"!

I've already recommended having more than one email address on your LinkedIn account. For example, a business email address and personal email address. However, I'd be a little careful about adding every email address you have as this might lead to random messages to connect from people who might also have those email addresses even though they possibly don't realise they've allowed LinkedIn to own it.

To conclude on this point, you have three options: -

- Everyone
- 2nd degree connections
- Nobody

The choice is yours but just beware of the implications of the decision you make.

Manage who can discover your profile from your email address

Choose who can discover your profile if they are not connected to you but have your email address

- ✓ Everyone
- 2nd-degree connections
- Nobody

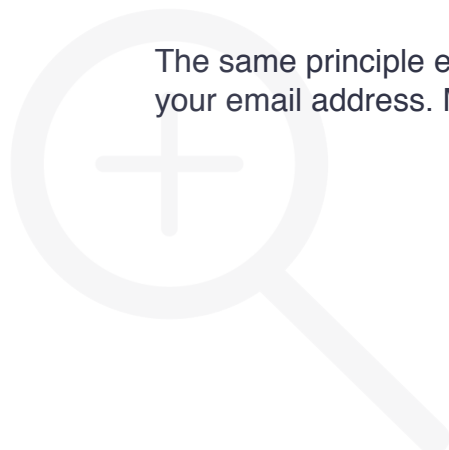
help them discover your profile or connect with you. [Learn more](#)

10.

Manage who can discover your profile from your phone number

Choose who can discover your profile if they have your phone number

The same principle exists regarding the scenario explained above for discovering your email address. Make the choice which suits you best.



Manage who can discover your profile from your phone number

Choose who can discover your profile if they have your phone number

- ✓ Everyone
- 2nd-degree connections
- Nobody

help them discover your profile or connect with you. [Learn more](#)

In reference to the above then, here is something to avoid:

11. Sync contacts

Manage or sync contacts to connect with people you know directly from your address book

And...

Sync calendar

Manage or sync calendar to get timely updates about who you'll be meeting with

For the reasons explained above, I'd avoid doing either of these, at all costs.



12.



Fake Profiles

I take my LinkedIn network very seriously. It is my life's trusted network of clients, colleagues, partners, suppliers, confidantes and friends.

On this basis I am very careful who I allow into my network.

Be careful of fake profiles!

A fake profile will not wear a mask - they will masquerade as a real person. But looking carefully you will tell something is up. A strange profile picture (possibly looking too good). A dubious University education. No '**About**' section. A limited Experience history. A greyed-out box appearing against all employers. The list goes on.

Be careful not to add a fake profile to your account by simply not taking the time to review each request in detail. It is worth the time and effort to do so to protect your personal identity.

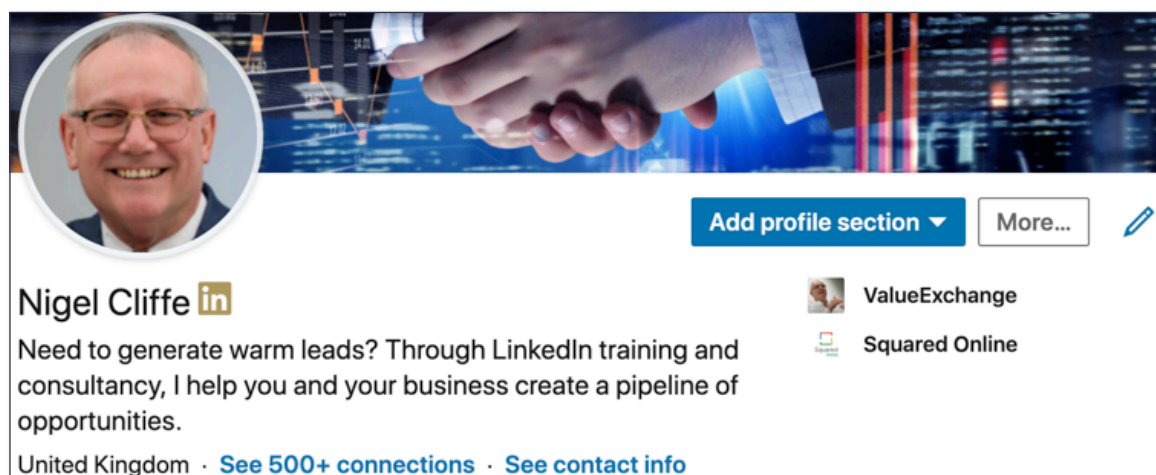
13. Your Birthday

Unless you enjoy receiving 100+ 'Congrats' messages on your birthday, I'd say displaying this data on your profile is not a good idea.

What question is asked of you when checking your security online - often by your bank? See what I mean?

Here's how to ensure this doesn't appear on your profile.

Go to your profile page...



Click on...

See contact info

A new pop-up box will open and at the foot of that is your birthday data. By **not** entering your data, your birthday will remain anonymous to all LinkedIn viewers, including cyber thieves.

(You will see by the same token, below, I choose **not** to add an address either, for the same reason as above. I don't see a need to display this data on my LinkedIn profile).

Edit contact info

Profile URL

[linkedin.com/in/nigeljcliffe](#)

Website URL

Other

Type (Other)

Remove website

+ Add website

Phone

Mobile

Address

Email address

[nigel@valueexchange.co.uk](#)

Twitter

+ Add instant messenger

Birthday

Month

Day

Birthday visible to: Your network

Save

And there you have it. I am sure there is more I could recommend for you to lock down your security on LinkedIn. It goes without saying that you should be careful not to post information that is any way sensitive. Perhaps your clients should remain private? Be careful what links you post, ensuring always that you have checked them beforehand. Do they go to where you expected? It is worth the few seconds it takes just to double check.

Taking the time to consider and adapt your profile as recommended above will afford you a little more security, releasing you to feel free to engage and participate on LinkedIn.

Wishing you every success on your LinkedIn journey!

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For more detailed information, tips, tricks and stories that drive success from LinkedIn, please feel free to visit:

[linkedintraining.co.uk](https://www.linkedintraining.co.uk)

