

Building Your Personal Brand on a Business Networking Platform

“...the more I posted, reacted, shared and engaged on the platform, the more my brand, my message and our work cascaded into the community.”



The LinkedIn™ business networking platform has quickly become the social platform for professionals seeking to network and develop business connections, boasting more than 830 million members and over 58 million registered companies in more than 200 countries. Therefore, it makes sense, as professionals who excel in cultivating relationships, that philanthropy leaders take advantage of this beneficial platform.

Are you using these types of platforms? If so, *how* are you using them and are you making the most of them? Consider this example. For me, almost on accident, LinkedIn™ has become an effective way to build my personal brand and promote my work as well as the missions of organizations I've had the pleasure of serving.

A few years back, I was with an organization that had gone through numerous name changes. As a result, there was a constant struggle with brand and name recognition, leaving them in desperate need of better marketing and branding within the community. At the time, I had started to use LinkedIn™ as a way to share my story as the new foundation leader—a way to connect with potential donors, sponsors and partners and a way to share the great work we were doing. What started happening, much to my surprise, was that the more I posted, reacted, shared and engaged on the platform, the more my brand, my message and our work cascaded into the community. We started to gain some serious and exciting momentum. Likewise, you represent your organization, and for that reason, building your personal brand is imperative no matter what role you serve within an organization.

Let's look at some ways to build success and promote your personal and organization brand on a business networking platform such as LinkedIn™:

Create a Robust Profile – Some of this may sound basic, but it's surprising how many people don't do these important things:

- Make sure you have a great headshot, something sharp and professional. Include an appropriate background photo as well.
- Add photos that are interesting or help tell your story.
- Take time to thoughtfully fill out the other pertinent sections such as Headline, About, Experience, Education, Licenses & Certifications, Volunteering and more. This is your chance to showcase all you have done and achieved, the things you care about and who you are as a person.
- Ensure your profile is one that is appealing to those who are searching to connect with you for jobs, advice, guidance, recruitment and more.

Be Purposeful in Making Connections – While it's important to build your network through those you already know, make sure you reach beyond that, especially in and around the health care philanthropy industry. Search for connections who have the same goals, missions, challenges and more. Connect with those who serve or benefit from your organization. Make it a point to add several connections each week.



“ While it's important to build your network through those you already know, make sure you reach beyond that, especially in and around the health care philanthropy industry.

Share Your Story Through Meaningful Engagement and Activity – Sharing posts, developing polls, recognizing teammates and creating videos are all ways to share your story, your values and your organization's mission. Make sure to actively post, share and engage on the platform to get the most out of it. I scroll through the home page at least once a day and engage with relevant content. I personally post an average of three times a week, striving to ensure my posts are varied for pertinent content, desired message and the audience I'm trying to reach.

Be Visible to Recruiters and Other Industry Leaders – Many recruiters actively use business networking and recruiting platforms to deepen their talent pipelines. Make sure your profile is one you'd want potential recruiters or industry leaders to be drawn to and impressed by as they search and network for their needs.

Build Your Talent Bench – LinkedIn™ networking can be a great way to find talent within the industry. I actively search for talent using different hashtags or key words. I have found so many incredible, talented and interesting people I have been intentional in connecting with, getting to know and subsequently building my own personal talent bench should I need to hire or recruit in the future.

Connect With Potential Donors – When it comes to finding and engaging with existing and new donors, I have found that using the LinkedIn™ platform has been incredibly effective, not only for me but also for my organizations’ development teams. Whether it’s cultivating and stewarding existing donors or prospecting and soliciting new ones, use these connections to personalize your brand, cultivate deeper relationships and expand your network.

Brag About Accomplishments – Every time my team, my organization or I achieve something noteworthy, I make sure to promptly share it online. Use the platform to brag about accomplishments, recognize teammates and share the momentum and success for the organization. Winning is contagious and it’s worth sharing!

Stay Abreast About Your Industry – Your connections, especially within your industry, can provide you with relevant updates, breaking news, significant changes, trends and more. As the nonprofit industry relies on relationships, connections, shared information and mutual experiences, it’s vital to stay abreast of all that is going on within the industry and with industries that affect your operations. [LinkedIn™ for Nonprofits](#) has been recently created, which I strongly suggest you also check out.

Inspire Others – I’ve been not only surprised but also touched by the power of connection provided through LinkedIn™. By becoming an active connection, sharing positivity, expressing gratitude and relaying relevant information, you may also be surprised by the number of people you can inspire along the way while being inspired yourself. You may also be surprised how all of this combines to create and cultivate your personal brand and that of your organization. Start today by [connecting with me](#) and then by building your own profile, network and brand.

About the Author: [Michelle Boggs](#) serves in an Of Counsel role with Accordant. You can reach her at MichelleBoggs@AccordantHealth.com or through [LinkedIn™](#). Michelle has no affiliation with LinkedIn™ and simply makes these recommendations based on requests by clients, coworkers and industry colleagues.



Michelle Boggs, MBA, CFRE · 2nd
Community Leader | Relationship Builder | SFBJ 40 Under 40 |
Founding Chief Member | Leadership Florida Connect Class 12
Talks about #thankyou, #teampayer, #bettertogether, #makinganimpact,
and #healthcareheroes
Hollywood, Florida, United States · [Contact info](#)

FIU Florida International University