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Establishing Credibility and Value on LinkedIn

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Both credibility and value are extremely important and are definitive contributing factors to your professional success. However, there are many differences between them and understanding those differences is very important on your journey to ultimate success. Many people have a misperception about the two. We will break down each one here so that you gain a deeper understanding of the concepts of each, specifically when you are using LinkedIn.

The definitions of credibility and value

If a person is credible, it means that he or she is genuine and honest and is a subject matter expert in his or her niche or industry. Of course, what goes along with that is the concept that the person contributes something positive to other people.

On the other hand, value means that what the person is offering to others contributes to those other people making some sort of positive progress with their own business. Most people have something valuable to contribute to others. However, credibility can be more difficult to establish and maintain. The fact is that the two are not mutually exclusive. A person can certainly be one without being the other. Let's break it down now.

- **Value:** You can contribute something positive to another person, which that person will in turn use and benefit because of it. You can offer strong, sensible guidance, you can offer information from which the other person learns all sorts of things, etc. In fact, you don't necessarily have to be within your area of expertise to make a solid contribution to the other person.

Of course, it will be much easier to offer information to the other person in your area of expertise because the chances are great that you could do it in your sleep. However, being the seasoned, knowledgeable person who you are, it will probably not be that difficult to help the person in any number of ways.

The main goal that you should have when it comes to adding value is that the other person has a takeaway that he or she can use and that something improves for that person. If you have built your reputation and your credibility, that is something that you can count on. Other people will respect your expertise and they will turn to you for all sorts of things.

- **Credibility:** On the flip side, you can also be credible but not contribute any real value to your target audience. In fact, there are several different ways in which this might be true. First of all, you can be extremely credible in your business and that means that you contribute a great deal of value to that business.

However, it is not necessarily safe to assume that you contribute anything valuable to people on an individual basis. Or, perhaps, you add value to a small number of people only. People will respect your credibility in that case but may not necessarily turn to you to help them with whatever problems they may be having with their business. It may not make sense when you think about it initially but if you dissect it in the way that it was just dissected, it probably does.

When it comes to evolving your business, you really can't succeed without being both valuable and credible.

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If you have one and not the other (whether it is credibility or value), you will not be able to succeed in business long-term. When it comes to establishing (or enhancing) your value and credibility through LinkedIn, there are several steps that you can take, which will help you to be successful.



- **Your LinkedIn profile must be effective and engaging:** Your profile is the first step. Many people establish profiles but don't bother to go beyond putting in the most minimal amount of information. You should not consider your LinkedIn profile as a resume exactly.

Although your resume and your profile have certain information in common, there are some differences as well. Your profile is an excellent resource for other people, as long as it is complete and has the information that should be in there. After all, people need to

grab onto something. Your profile will add to your credibility. However, if you want to add value, you need to come up with ways to solve the problem(s) that the other person is experiencing.

- **Choose your target audience carefully:** If you don't have the appropriate target audience, no matter what information you share will not be effective and it will not produce the desired results. In order to increase your credibility and your value, you need to choose the appropriate target audience and then you need to start interacting with them on a consistent basis.

If you aren't sure how to go about finding the appropriate target audience, your starting point should be businesses on LinkedIn that have a synergy with your business. Once you have identified the people, who may not be your actual target audience members, you can get to know them and ask them to introduce you to other people who will actually end up being your target audience members. It may take a few steps but you will have finally arrived.

- **Post amazingly relevant content on LinkedIn:** As you are building your credibility and your value, one of the best ways to do that is by offering top-quality, amazingly relevant content. The principle that should drive you is solving the other person's problem(s) (WIIFM? "What's In It For Me?"). The more consistently you deliver that quality of content to your target audience members, the more they will get to know your brand, your business, and what you stand for. That is exactly how you build a solid, loyal customer base.

You can use a combination of original and curated content, which generally works well. However, it is important to remember that you will want to add your own commentary to the curated content and always give attribution of that content to the person who wrote it.

- **Be a part of the discussion:** Not only should you have discussions with other people about the content that you post but you should also have discussions about other people's content online. Of course, that will only apply if that content is valuable and relevant to your target audience. Doing that will also increase your credibility because you will be demonstrating that your main objective is contributing value to the other person. It is definitely worth making that effort.

Conclusion

Credibility and value are not the same things but they are both essential to your success in business. You need both in order to realize your goals and your dreams for your business. You should start with your LinkedIn profile and go from there. Your profile must be complete and compelling to the point where the other person wants to interact with you online. You will want to make it a point to consistently offer something of value to your target audience members. In turn, they will become loyal to you and to your brand.

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Michael Cohn

Founder and CTO at [CompuKol Communications LLC](#)

Michael Cohn is the founder and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of [CompuKol Communications LLC](#). He has over 25 years of experience in IT and web technologies. Mr. Cohn founded CompuKol Communications to help small businesses and entrepreneurs increase their exposure and reputation on the Internet. CompuKol consults, creates, and implements communication strategies for small businesses to monopolize their markets with a unique business voice, vision, and visibility.

Prior to that, Mr. Cohn spent a significant amount of time at a major telecommunications company, where his main focus was on initiating and leading synergy efforts across all business units by dramatically improving efficiency, online collaboration, and the company's Intranet capabilities, which accelerated gains in business productivity. His expertise includes social media marketing strategies; internet marketing; web presence design; business analysis; project management; management of global cross-matrix teams; systems engineering and analysis, architecture, prototyping and integration; technology evaluation and assessment; systems development; performance evaluation; and management of off-shore development.

Mr. Cohn earned a Master's degree in project management from George Washington University in Washington, DC; and a Master's degree in computer science and a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ.



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