

# MASTERING THE LINKEDIN ALGORITHM IN 25/26

## An evidence based playbook.

LinkedIn's feed is now driven by large-scale neural ranking systems (transformers on top of neural retrieval), with quality conversation, topical relevance and "dwell time" as the strongest observable levers for organic reach.

A June–July 2025 ranking test briefly resurfaced older posts more aggressively, then was dialled back after user pushback, underscoring that relevance can outweigh recency, but the platform is still tuning how much. For creators and brands, the practical edge comes from: publishing native, topic-consistent content; engineering the first 60 minutes of engagement; and using post-level analytics to iterate. [Social Media Today](#)

### 1. What LinkedIn Says: The Feed in 2025

Engagement time ("dwell time"). LinkedIn's engineering team has explicitly discussed using dwell time as a ranking signal since 2020; this remains consistent with current practitioner guidance on creating posts people stop to read. [Source](#).

Recency vs. relevance: 2025 test and rollback. In mid-June 2025, LinkedIn tested showing more older but still relevant posts at the top of feeds; after complaints about staleness, the company said it rolled back the change to rebalance freshness with relevance. Practically, this means evergreen content can live longer, but chronology still matters. [Business Insider](#)

Format investment: video and creators. LinkedIn is expanding BrandLink (creator/publisher video with pre-roll ads) and reporting +20% uploads and +36% views YoY, signalling continued emphasis on short, native video alongside documents/carousels and text. [Reuters](#)

### 2. What Expert Consensus Says

Reach feels tighter; quality wins. Summaries of Richard van der Blom's 2025 Algorithm Insights report (third-party recaps) note lower median views and slower follower growth versus prior years, attributing performance to topic relevance, authority signals and meaningful comments over vanity reactions. Treat these as directional, not canonical, but they reflect widespread creator experience this year.

Native > outbound. Social strategy shops tracking LinkedIn emphasise native formats (text, document carousels, short video) and conversation prompts over link drops. They also warn against "engagement bait" and mass-tagging. [Social Media Dashboard](#)

Employee advocacy and relationships. Expert guides continue to show employee posts often outperform Company Pages for organic reach, with the strength of member-member relationships shaping distribution. [Sprout Social](#)

### 3. How the Ranking Works (Practically)

Below is a simplified view of LinkedIn's ranking pipeline mapped to what you can actually influence.

1. Retrieval (who might see it). Neural retrieval (LiNR) rapidly assembles candidates for each member, mixing in-network with qualified out-of-network content. Your levers: clear topical consistency (so the system can match you to the right interest graphs) and audience interactions that create strong edges. [arXiv](#)
2. Scoring (who most likely cares). Large ranking models (LiRank → LiGR) predict multi-task outcomes such as long dwell, comments, shares and combine them. Your levers: craft posts that earn time on page and spark substantive replies; optimise the first two lines to secure “See more” clicks and dwell. [arXiv](#)
3. Early batch test (scale up or stall). New posts hit a small test cohort first; if they stop, read and converse, distribution expands. Your levers: post when your core audience is online; reply quickly to comments; invite specific perspectives (not “comment yes”). Practitioner guides and platform behaviour align on this pattern. [Social Media Dashboard](#)
4. Lifecycle & resurfacing. Posts can re-enter feeds if still relevant, but LinkedIn walked back the July test that over-weighted older content. Your lever: create evergreen frameworks and consider a thoughtful follow-up comment 12–24 hours later to re-ignite discussion without tripping “engagement bait.” [Business Insider](#)

### 4. What to Publish (and WHY it Works)

High-yield formats right now:

- Text posts with a sharp hook and clear POV. Fast to consume; ideal for eliciting comments. [Sprout Social](#)
- Document carousels (PDFs) that package frameworks, checklists, or case snapshots. They generate flipping behaviour and dwell. [Agorapulse](#)
- Short native video (30–90s) with captions; BrandLink growth shows LinkedIn is leaning into video. Place your logo or key point early. [Reuters](#)

Tactics that travel with any format:

- Lead with the problem statement in line 1–2; earn the tap. [Social Media Dashboard](#)
- Ask open, specific questions that invite multi-sentence replies. Avoid “like/comment/share” bait. [Sprout Social](#)
- Keep it native; if you must link out, offer enough context/value in-post for stand-alone consumption. [Social Media Dashboard](#)

Hashtags, tags, and signals:

- Use 2-4 relevant hashtags as labels for searchability; stuffing reads as spammy. [Social Media Dashboard](#)
- Tag only directly involved people/brands; mass-tagging degrades perceived quality and can suppress reach. [Sprout Social](#)

## 5. The First 60 Minutes (A Checklist)

- Timing: publish when your audience is usually active (mornings/lunch in their time zone). This maximises the initial cohort. [Sprout Social](#)
- Seed engagement the right way: alert one or two genuinely relevant peers to add substantive comments (not “Great post”). [Sprout Social](#)
- Be present: reply quickly, ask follow-ups, and weave commenters together (“Adding to Sarah’s point...”). Quality comment threads are amplification fuel. [Sprout Social](#)
- Hold edits: avoid heavy post edits in the first hour; let the ranking test stabilize. Practitioner consensus recommends stability during the initial window. [Social Media Dashboard](#)
- Reactivation: 12-24 hours later, add a useful clarifier, example, or data point in the comments to extend discussion without baiting. [Agorapulse](#)

## 6. Measurement & Iteration

What to track weekly:

- Post-level analytics: impressions, unique viewers, profile visits and follower growth from the post, average watch time (video), and top audience job titles/industries. LinkedIn expanded post analytics in 2025 and has continued to roll out related notifications and API access via partners.
- Conversation depth: % of comments >25 words; number of back-and-forth threads. Practitioner sources and LinkedIn’s dwell-time emphasis support weighting quality over quantity. [Social Media Dashboard](#)
- Topic coherence: are your top-performing posts tightly clustered by theme? Coherence helps the system match you to interest graphs. [arXiv](#)

How to iterate:

- Double down on topics that consistently drive long dwell and multi-comment threads. Shift low-yield topics to newsletters or blogs. [Sprout Social](#)
- Test format swaps (e.g., convert a strong text post into a 6-slide carousel or 60-sec video) while keeping the same core idea.

## 7. Myth vs. Reality (2025)

“Hashtags drive reach.” Today they are lightweight labels, useful for discovery/search, not distribution engines. Use a few, relevant ones.

“Links are poison.” Outbound links can depress dwell, but strong, context-rich native posts with a link can still perform when conversation quality is high. Keep the post self-contained and the link supplementary.

“Video always wins.” LinkedIn is investing in video, but performance still hinges on topic fit and watch time, not the format alone.

“Old posts are dead.” Evergreen posts can resurface based on relevance; that said, the July test that over-weighted older content has been scaled back.

## 8. A Simple, Weekly Cadence

- 2-3 text posts with strong hooks, possibly ending in a pointed, open question.
- 1 document carousel summarising a framework, checklist, or case learning.
- 1 short native video (30-90s) distilling a single idea, with captions and the key point in seconds 0-5.
- Daily comment reps: add thoughtful takes on 5-10 relevant posts (this strengthens relationship edges and primes your next post’s test batch).

## 9. Governance & Brand Safety

LinkedIn publishes Responsible AI principles (transparency, accountability, fairness). For regulated industries or executive communications, align your content review process with those principles and maintain clear sourcing when presenting data claims. [engineering.linkedin.com](https://engineering.linkedin.com)

## 10. Sources & Further Reading

- LinkedIn Engineering: LiGR (From Features to Transformers: Redefining Ranking for Scalable Impact), 2025. [arXiv](#)
- LinkedIn Engineering: LiRank (Industrial Large-Scale Ranking Models at LinkedIn), 2024. [arXiv](#)
- LinkedIn Engineering: LiNR (Model-Based Neural Retrieval on GPUs at LinkedIn), 2024. [arXiv](#)
- LinkedIn Engineering: Understanding dwell time to improve LinkedIn feed ranking (post listing), 2020. [engineering.linkedin.com](#)
- Business Insider: LinkedIn is showing more old posts (June 2025 test), and explanation from LinkedIn's VP of Product. [Business Insider](#)
- Social Media Today: LinkedIn rolls back older-posts resurfacing (July 2025). [Social Media Today](#)
- Reuters: BrandLink video and creator expansion (Aug 2025). [Reuters](#)
- Sprout Social: How the LinkedIn algorithm works in 2025 (expert guide). [Sprout Social](#)
- Hootsuite: LinkedIn algorithm guide, 2025 (best practices; hashtags, spam/bait cautions). [Social Media Dashboard](#)
- Agorapulse: LinkedIn Algorithm 2025 - what's changed (third-party summary of van der Blom data). [Agorapulse](#)