

# Is It OK to Expose Your Failures on LinkedIn?



By Raphael Tsavkko Garcia

Photo: Unapong

I've been debating (with myself mostly) quite a lot these days about LinkedIn and how it can promote an unhealthy idea of success—and how the whole idea of success can be problematic.

Pretty much every post I see on LinkedIn is from someone celebrating a new job, a milestone reached, or to give some motivational tips to those who are struggling to “get there.” But is quite rare to see someone complaining about not being able to “get there” (yet?) or simply listing

and exposing their flaws and failures. Sure, sometimes you see someone sharing about a barrier they had to cross, or difficulties along the way, but I'd say that even though there are no filters like on Instagram, LinkedIn can sometimes look very fake.

Why do I have this opinion? A steady stream of posts spotlighting constant success and happiness is not exclusive to LinkedIn. We have all heard about how “[unreal](#)” the lives of influencers (or pretty much [everyone](#)) are on Instagram and

other social media websites. They make sure we only see the good and bright side of life, momentary snapshots, seconds or minutes of a day, but we often compare our own lives and feel we are not as accomplished and happy as we should be. After all, why is everybody so happy all the time and we are not?

I know we often present ourselves in social media not as we are, but as we want to be or want others to see us, but sometimes we just need some failures to remind ourselves and others that we are only human.

I've been trying to transition from being a freelancer to have a standard, 9-to-5 job for the past 3 years—and I have failed miserably so far. Even before I finished my Ph.D. in 2019, I have been actively searching for postdoc or research positions in academia within my areas of expertise.

Photo: Yin Yang



And I got nothing. Only one interview and no job at all. I've applied to more than 100 universities and programs, and came back with nothing. So, I pretty much left academia (or academia left me) and started looking for job opportunities in other areas.

I tried to leverage my decade as a freelance journalist, and my extensive experience with NGOs and activism. I sent over 200 CV's and those dreadful cover letters (hello dear recruiters, it is really hard for someone actively looking for a job to write hundreds of cover letters that no one is gonna read, why not just ask for a CV and a very brief statement and if you like what you see, then ask for the comprehensive cover letter?) and in 2 years, I got two interviews. Sure, I went up to the final stage, but in the end, I finished second (or third).

Bottom line, I failed.

I'm not a failure, but I did fail—and I know many people have been and are going through the same situation every day. I didn't get a job or, as people say in LinkedIn, "that dream job that I was looking for my whole life and dedicated everything to get it and that I'm so proud, etc., etc., etc."

I'm quite open about my failures. Often when I have to deal with editors who vanish or with dry spells, mental blockages, late payments, etc., in my freelancing life, I tweet about it, quite openly. It's a way to relax and also get some support. And we all need support.



Photo: iStock

But am I allowed to announce my failures and expose myself on LinkedIn? I believe the answer is yes.

In a sense I think I'm able to show others that failing is part of life and not everyone has that dream job or is 100% happy with their careers. Being able to fail is also being human and is respecting everyone's mental health. It is a way to get rid of that question that keeps floating and punching you in the gut: "Why is everyone able to get an amazing job, but me?"

Well, I don't know, but the only choice I have is to keep trying while building a shield around myself and being able to comment about it. And... Is everyone really so happy about their jobs and never hitting a wall, getting stuck and simply pretending they cannot be happier because that's what society expect from us?

We should all be able to speak up, complain. We are all human, we fail, and those failures help us grow. It is ok to

expose your (my) failures publicly. It is good to show people in the same situation that they are not alone (and therefore you're not alone).

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