aviationjobsearch

Building your personal brand in aviation



Aviation employs millions of people across airlines, MROs, airports, manufacturers and business aviation operators, yet anyone who has worked in it for a few years knows how often the same names come up. The training captain from your type rating course may sit on the interview panel at your next airline, and the licensed engineer you worked alongside on night shifts could be running a hangar somewhere else in three years' time.

That combination of global scale and close professional circles means your reputation tends to arrive before you do. Recruiters and headhunters will usually look you up before they make contact, and hiring managers often ask around before they shortlist. Whatever they find, whether that is a detailed LinkedIn profile, a well-structured CV, a candidate profile listing your hours and type ratings, or almost nothing at all, becomes their first impression of you.

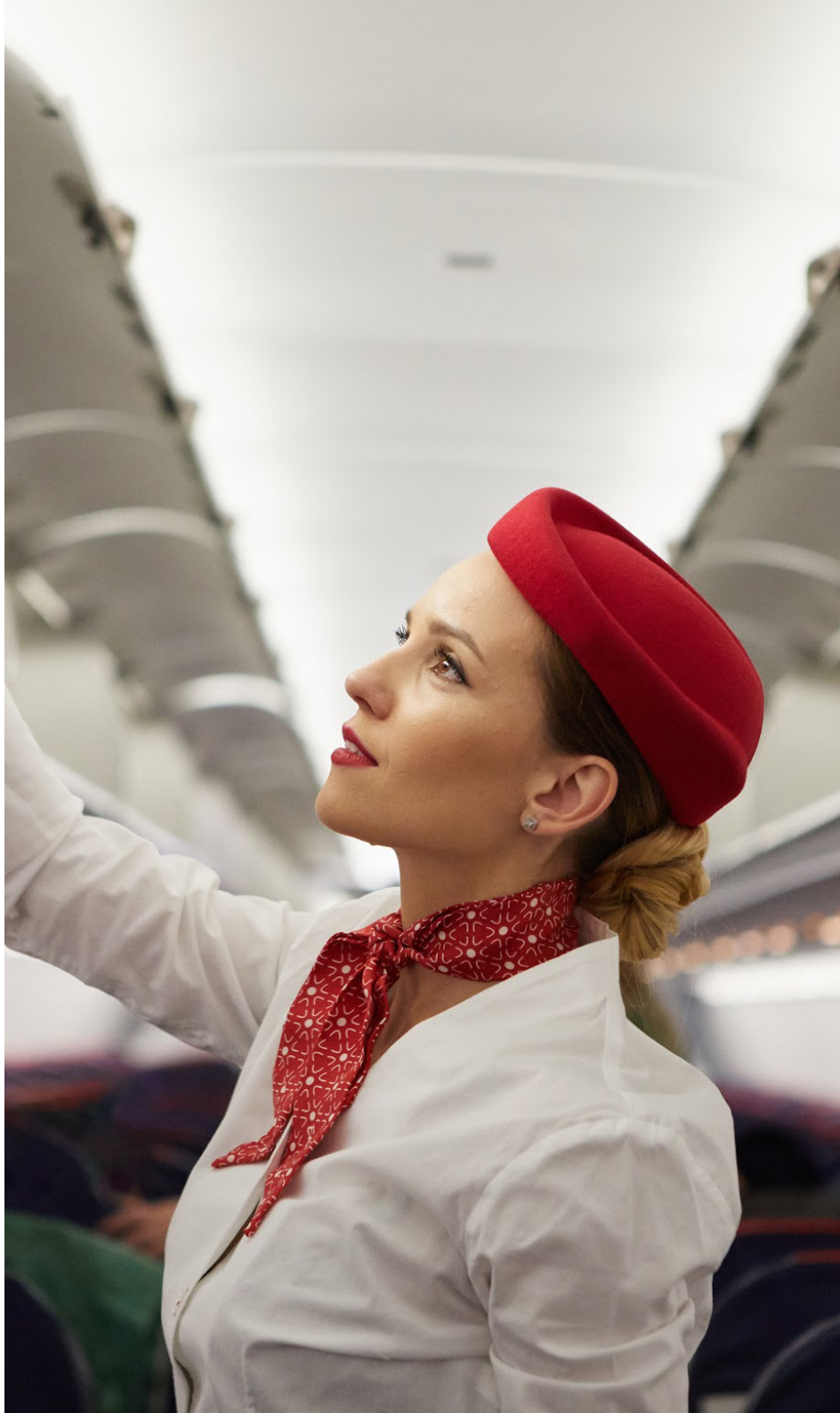
This guide is for pilots, engineers, cabin crew and anyone else working in aviation who wants to take control of that first impression. It covers social media, your CV, networking at events and online, and how to set up a profile that recruiters can find without you having to chase them.



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What a personal brand means in aviation

Your personal brand is the combination of what people can find out about you and what they hear about you from others. It includes your licences, ratings and experience, how you present them, how you conduct yourself online, and the reputation you have built with colleagues, trainers and managers over the course of your career.

Most aviation professionals already have a good reputation offline, because the industry runs on checks, records and references. The gaps tend to appear online, where profiles fall out of date, details contradict each other and an old public post can be the first thing a recruiter comes across.

Where recruiters look, and what they check

Where they look	What they are checking
LinkedIn	Whether your role, employer, dates and qualifications match your CV, and how you engage with others in the industry
Your CV	Licences, ratings, hours, aircraft types and a clear employment history
Job board candidate profiles	Searchable details such as licence type, total hours, type ratings and location
A Google search of your name	Public social media accounts, forum posts, comments and photos
Mutual connections	What former colleagues, trainers and managers say about working with you

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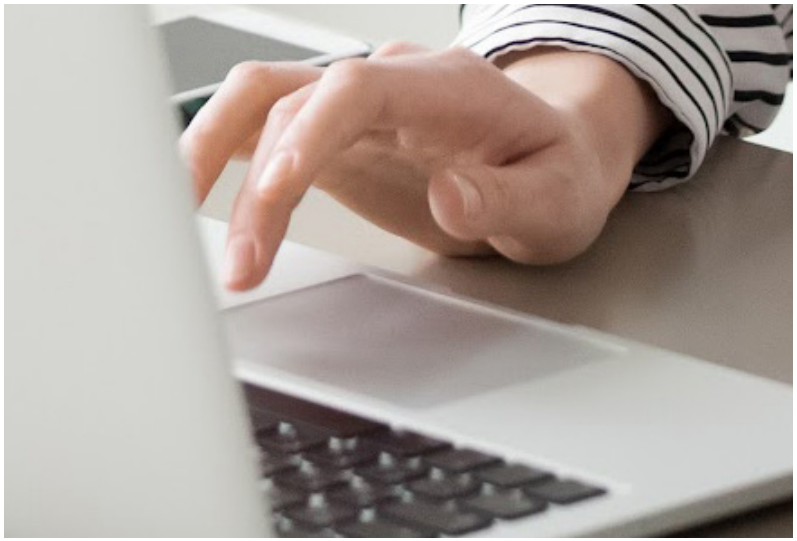
Audit your online footprint

Before building anything new, spend fifteen minutes finding out what already exists. Search your full name alongside your job title, your current employer and any previous employers, and look through the first two pages of results as well as the image results.

Then work through the following:

- Check which of your social media accounts are public, and what someone outside your friends list can see
- Look at old profile photos and cover images, particularly on platforms you no longer use
- Compare your LinkedIn employment dates, job titles and qualifications with your CV
- Look for any posts or comments about your employer, colleagues, passengers or incidents
- Close or lock down accounts you no longer use

The aim at this stage is consistency. Every place a recruiter can find you should show the same dates, the same hours and the same qualifications, so nobody has to work out which version is correct.



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LinkedIn and social media

LinkedIn is where most aviation recruiters, HR teams and hiring managers spend their time online, and a well-kept profile lets them understand who you are within a few seconds of landing on it.

Your headline is the first thing people read, so use it to state your role and qualifications rather than a general description of yourself. Some formats that work well:

- Pilots: A320 First Officer | 3,500 hours | EASA ATPL
- Engineers: B1 Licensed Aircraft Engineer | A320 and ATR 72 type rated | Part-145
- Cabin crew: Senior Cabin Crew | Long-haul A350 and B787 | 8 years' experience
- Operations: Flight Operations Controller | Crew and fleet planning | AOC operations

Beyond the profile itself, LinkedIn rewards people who take part. Some practical ways to build visibility over time:

- Join groups related to your role, aircraft type or sector, such as pilot, engineering, MRO or business aviation communities
- Follow the airlines, MROs, operators and recruiters you would like to work with
- Comment on posts when you have something useful to add, such as your own experience of a training course, aircraft type or base
- Share your milestones, such as completing a type rating, passing a licence upgrade, finishing a course or starting a new role
- Ask former managers or training captains for a short recommendation soon after you finish working with them

You do not need to post every week. A handful of thoughtful comments each month, plus an update whenever something changes in your career, will keep your profile active and in front of the people who could influence your next move.

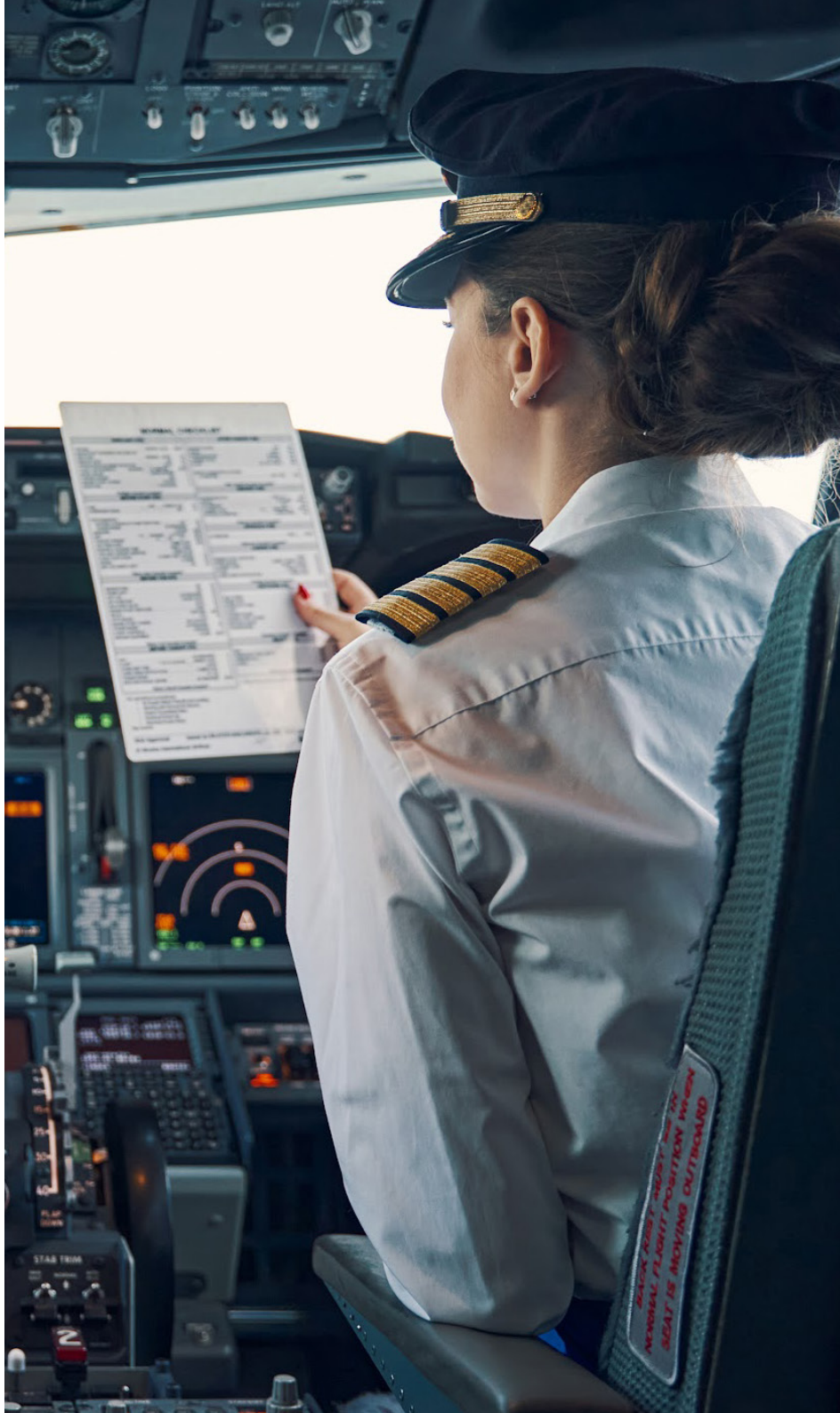
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Know your employer's social media guidelines

Most airlines, MROs and airports have social media guidelines in place for employees, usually in the staff handbook or on the company intranet.

These typically cover what you can say about the company, whether you can post photos in uniform or airside, and how to respond if a passenger or journalist contacts you online. Breaching them can lead to disciplinary action, and in some cases dismissal, however harmless a post seemed at the time.

If you have never read your employer's guidelines, find them and read them. If anything is unclear, ask your line manager or HR team before you post rather than after.



What not to post

What to avoid	Why it matters
Photos or videos from the flight deck during operations	Can breach SOPs and sterile flight deck rules, and may be treated as a safety matter by your employer or regulator
Rosters, trip patterns or flight numbers in advance	Raises security concerns and is likely to breach company guidelines
Staff ID cards, security passes, airside areas or restricted equipment	Pass details can be copied and used for fraud or to attempt unauthorised access
Licence numbers, crew IDs or medical details	Scammers use this information to impersonate aviation professionals or to target you with fake job offers
Commentary on accidents, incidents or ongoing investigations	Speculation can interfere with investigations, cause distress to those affected and stay attached to your name for years
Complaints about your employer, colleagues or passengers	Future employers will read it as a sign of how you might talk about them
Aircraft defects, maintenance findings or internal documents	Commercially sensitive and often covered by confidentiality clauses in your contract
Anything in uniform your employer would not approve of	The uniform links you to the company, so your conduct online reflects on them

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A CV that reinforces your personal brand

Your CV and your online profiles should describe the same professional. When a recruiter sees 3,200 hours on your CV, 2,900 on LinkedIn and a type rating listed on one that is missing from the other, they start to wonder which version is accurate, and that doubt can be enough to move you down a shortlist.

- A CV that supports your personal brand will:
- Open with a professional summary of two or three lines covering your role, licence, aircraft types or specialism, and the kind of role you are looking for
- List licences, ratings and certificates near the top, with issuing authority and validity dates
- Break down hours by total, type, PIC and multi-crew for pilots, or set out licence categories, type ratings and Part-145 or Part-CAMO experience for engineers
- Give a complete employment history with accurate dates, including short contracts
- Include training such as CRM, SMS, human factors or instructor qualifications where relevant
- Fit within two pages for most roles

Keeping it current

Waiting until you need a job to update your CV usually means rebuilding it from memory, often under pressure and against a deadline. Updating it little and often avoids that. A useful habit is to add to your CV whenever something changes, whether that is a new type rating, a licence upgrade, a course completed or a change of role, and to review your hours every three months, using your logbook or training records as the source.

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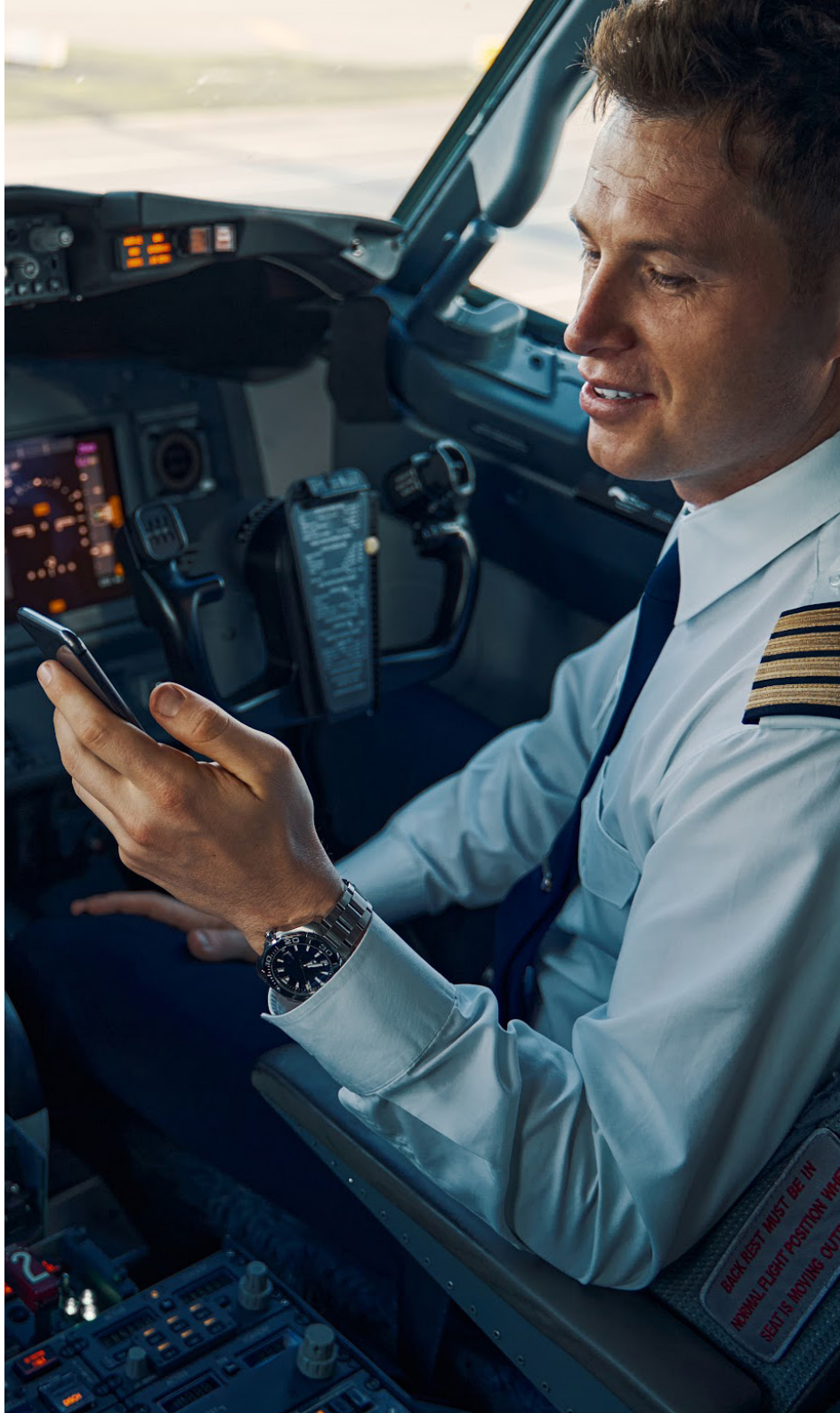
Networking, online and in person

Many aviation jobs are filled through recommendations and introductions, and the people making those introductions tend to think first of someone they have met or spoken to recently.

Online

LinkedIn groups, professional forums and the comment sections of industry posts are all good places to build relationships with peers at other airlines and MROs. Short, relevant contributions spread over several months usually lead to more conversations than one long post.

When you send a connection request to someone you have not met, add a short note explaining who you are and why you are getting in touch.



In Person

Conferences, expos, careers fairs and airshows bring recruiters, hiring managers and peers into one place over a day or two. Events such as MRO Europe, Pilot Careers Live, the Farnborough International Airshow and the Paris Air Show, along with Royal Aeronautical Society branch lectures and union or association events, give you a chance to meet people you would otherwise only ever see on a screen.

To get the most from an event:

- Check the exhibitor and speaker list beforehand and note the companies and people you would like to speak to
- Bring printed copies of your CV, or have a PDF ready on your phone to send on the spot
- Prepare a short introduction covering your role, experience and the opportunities interest you
- Ask about the company's fleet, bases, training or recruitment plans, rather than only asking whether they are hiring
- Follow up within 48 hours with a LinkedIn connection request or an email that mentions where you met



How headhunters search for candidates

Recruiters and headhunters filling aviation roles rarely begin by reading CVs one at a time, and instead start by filtering.

A search for a captain on a specific type might begin with licence type, type rating, total hours, hours on type, PIC hours and location, and only the candidates who meet those criteria make it onto the shortlist.

An engineering search might filter by licence category, type ratings and Part-145 experience before anyone reads a word of a personal introduction.

For you, this means your key criteria need to be easy to find, properly labelled and accurate, and the few lines you have for a personal introduction should be spent on information that helps you through the next round of shortlisting.

What headhunters filter by first

- Licence type and issuing authority
- Type ratings and aircraft experience
- Total hours and hours on type, broken down where relevant
- Current role and employer
- Location, right to work and willingness to relocate
- Availability and notice period

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What to leave out of your personal introduction

One of the most common things we see on candidate profiles is a personal introduction filled with details headhunters do not need, such as how many children someone has, their marital status, their hobbies or how much they enjoy travelling.

These details take up the lines a recruiter reads straight after filtering, and they push the information that could get you shortlisted further down the page.

A personal introduction works better when it reads as a short professional summary. Compare these two:

Less effective

> Married father of three who loves golf, travelling and spending time with my family. Passionate about aviation since childhood and looking for a new challenge.

More effective

> B737 Captain with 6,800 hours (4,100 PIC), current UK CAA ATPL and Class 1 medical. Line Training Captain since 2022. Based in Manchester and open to long-haul opportunities in Europe or the Middle East.

If a hobby is relevant to your work, such as instructing at a flying club or volunteering with an aviation heritage group, it can earn a line further down your CV.

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Your Aviation Job Search profile

Aviation Job Search is set up around the way aviation recruiters search. When you upload your CV, your candidate profile is created automatically, so the whole process takes a few minutes rather than an evening of filling in forms.

The details headhunters filter by, including your hours, licence types and aircraft experience, are separated out and highlighted on your profile, so they are visible at the point where shortlisting decisions are made.

Airlines, MROs, recruitment agencies and other aviation employers use the platform to search for candidates, which gives you a route to being headhunted for roles you might not have seen advertised.

Updating your profile is quick and works best little and often. Add your latest hours every few months, upload a fresh CV when you gain a rating or change role, and check your location and availability whenever your circumstances change. Current figures give a recruiter confidence that what they are reading is accurate.



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Your brand by role

Role	Lead with	Where to be seen
Pilots	Licence and issuing authority, type ratings, total and PIC hours, medical class, any training or management roles	LinkedIn pilot groups, Pilot Careers Live, union and association events, your Aviation Job Search profile
Licensed engineers	Licence category (B1, B2, C), type ratings, Part-145 and Part-CAMO experience, base maintenance or line station experience	MRO events such as MRO Europe, engineering groups on LinkedIn, manufacturer training courses
Cabin crew	Years of experience, aircraft types, long-haul or short-haul, senior or purser roles, languages, safety and first aid training	LinkedIn, airline open days and recruitment events
Air traffic controllers	Ratings and endorsements, unit experience, licensing authority	Professional bodies such as GATCO, ATC groups on LinkedIn, industry conferences
Operations and ground staff	Systems used, operational areas, certifications such as dangerous goods or airside driving	LinkedIn, airport and ground handling events
Cadets and students	Training organisation, licence progress, hours to date, any aviation-related work experience	Careers fairs, Pilot Careers Live, Royal Aeronautical Society young members' events, flight school and university networks

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How to avoid common mistakes

Mistake	What to do instead
Different hours or dates on your CV, LinkedIn and job board profiles	Update all three at the same time, using your logbook or training records as the source
A LinkedIn headline that says only "Pilot" or "Engineer"	Include your role, aircraft types and licence so you appear in recruiter searches
Family details and hobbies in your professional summary	Use the summary for your experience, qualifications and the roles you want
Posting from the flight deck, hangar or airside without checking the rules	Read your employer's social media guidelines and ask if you are unsure
Commenting on incidents during ongoing investigations	Leave the analysis to investigators and keep your views off public platforms
Only networking when you need a job	Stay in touch with contacts throughout your career, with a message or comment every few months
Turning down external training because it falls outside your usual role	Accept it where you can, for the contacts you will make as well as the qualification
Uploading a CV and never going back to it	Update your profile whenever something changes, and check it every three months

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Your personal brand checklist

Use this checklist to bring your online presence, CV and profiles into line with each other.

Your online footprint

- ☐ Searched your name online and reviewed the results, including images
- ☐ Personal social media accounts set to private, or checked for anything you would not want seen
- ☐ Old or unused accounts closed
- ☐ No posts showing passes, rosters, flight deck footage or internal information

LinkedIn

- ☐ Headline includes your role, aircraft types or licence
- ☐ Profile photo is professional and recent
- ☐ Employment history and dates match your CV
- ☐ Joined 2+ groups relevant to your role or sector
- ☐ At least one recommendation from a manager, trainer or colleague
- ☐ Read your employer's social media guidelines

Your CV or resume

- ☐ Short professional summary at the top, with no family or personal details
- ☐ Licences and ratings near the top, with issuing authority and validity
- ☐ Hours broken down by total, type and PIC (or the equivalent for your role)
- ☐ Complete employment history with accurate dates
- ☐ Saved as a PDF and no longer than two pages

Your Aviation Job Search profile

- ☐ CV uploaded and profile created
- ☐ Hours, licence types and aircraft experience checked for accuracy
- ☐ Location and availability up to date
- ☐ Reminder set to review your profile every 3 months

Your network

- ☐ 1 or 2 events chosen to attend in the next 12 months
- ☐ Two or three recruiters identified who specialise in your sector
- ☐ Two or three contacts ready to give a reference at short notice

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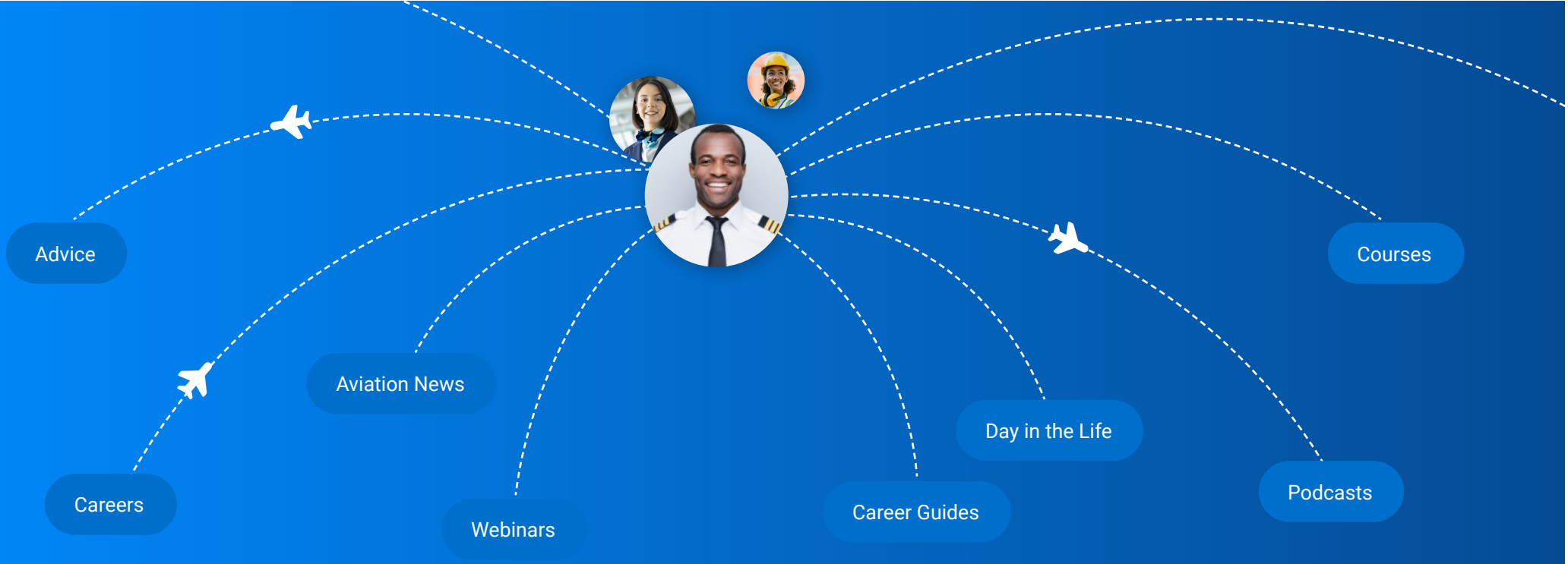
Final thoughts

The professionalism aviation demands on the line, in the hangar and in the cabin is already part of how colleagues see you. Bringing the same care to your online presence means recruiters and future employers see an accurate picture of you at the moment they are deciding who to contact.

None of this takes much time. An hour to audit your accounts and update your CV, a few minutes each month on LinkedIn and a quick update to your profile whenever your hours or ratings change will keep your personal brand current, whether you are looking for your next role or happy where you are.

Upload your CV to Aviation Job Search and your profile is created automatically, with your hours, licences and aircraft experience ready for headhunters to find.





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