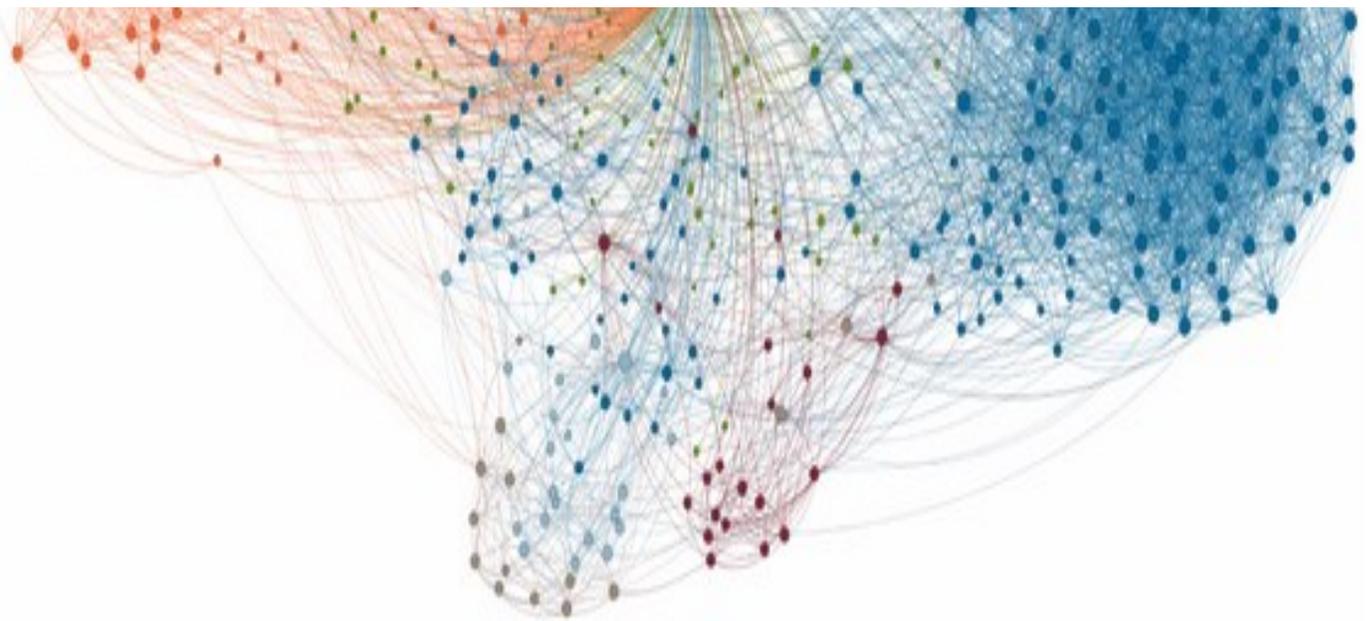




GET FOUND ON LINKEDIN



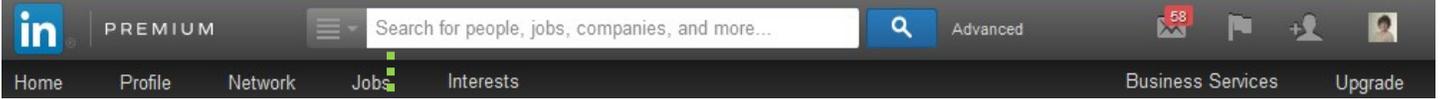
**THE COLLEGE STUDENT
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE
TO USING LINKEDIN IN
YOUR JOB SEARCH**

More Than A Resumé

NOVEMBER 2013



LINKEDIN PROFILE MUST-HAVES



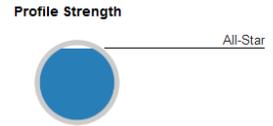
USE KEYWORDS

Make sure your profile appears in search results by searching job descriptions for keywords and noting the location and frequency. Apply to your own profile.

PROFESSIONAL-LOOKING PHOTO

With a professional-looking photo you are 7x more likely to be viewed by others.

Jane Horowitz
 Career-launch Coach ♦ Personal Branding ♦ Job Search Planning ♦ Interview Prep ♦ First Year Coaching
 Denver, Colorado | Professional Training & Coaching

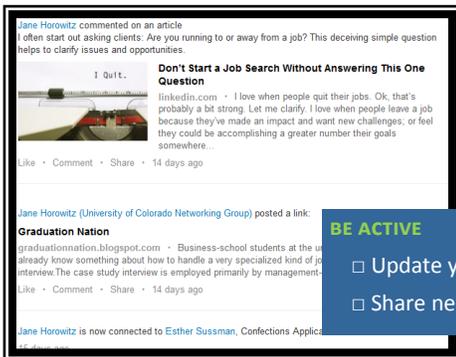


CUSTOMIZE YOUR URL & INCLUDE YOUR EMAIL.



BRAND YOUR PROFESSIONAL HEADLINE

Include information to encourage recruiters to find you and find out more about you. You have 110 characters to work with—make them count.



BE ACTIVE

- Update your status regularly
- Share news within your career field



OPTIMIZE YOUR LOCATION

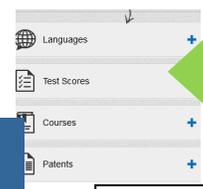
Recruiters can search for professionals by locations. Help LinkedIn find contacts and networking opportunities close to you.

ALIGN WITH YOUR CAREER FIELD

Be found by recruiters by being specific about your career field (s).

SUPPORT YOUR HEADLINE & TELL YOUR STORY

- Write in the first-person
- Use keywords
- Use characters, symbols and white space



GET CONNECTED

When you don't have enough connections you won't show up in searches.



SHOWCASE YOUR WORK

Upload projects, videos, honors & awards, certifications, language skills and more.



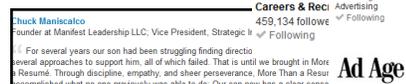
JOIN RELEVANT GROUPS

Make connections & participate in discussion.



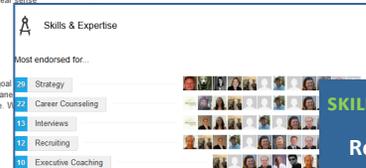
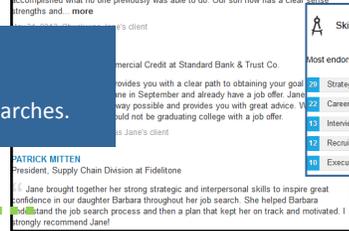
FOLLOW COMPANIES

FOLLOW INDUSTRIES



BUILD CREDIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATIONS & ENDORSEMENTS

Recommendations affect how you appear in searches.



SKILLS & EXPERTISE

Recruiters search by skills and look for endorsements.

LinkedIn has changed job searching.

Looking for a job—even an entry-level one—is hard work. Social-media websites like LinkedIn have made job hunting easier by automating many tasks. But, you still need to make personal connections with people in your career field and with employers you are targeting to find the good jobs—the hidden ones. Put on your sales hat and start to engage other professionals on a more personal level. Get introductions to people outside of your network who can help you with your career. LinkedIn can help you do this. The key is knowing how to use LinkedIn.

In January, LinkedIn announced it reached 200 million+ professionals with 1 million+ groups, representing more than 150 industries and 2 million+ companies, as well as 60,000+ alumni groups and associations. It's a primary tool for hiring managers and recruiters searching for talent. Yet, only 43 percent of college students use the site. The company is working to appeal to colleges, college campus recruiters, and college students specifically by adding options for members to list campus organizations, honors and awards, along with relevant coursework and test scores.

It's no longer a question of whether having a LinkedIn page is necessary and if it really aids in your job search. The only question is: **Why don't you have a LinkedIn Profile?**

An optimized LinkedIn Profile can have far-reaching effects. [BrandYourself recently analyzed 100,000 profiles](#) and found that LinkedIn was the social network most often appearing at the top of Google search results. This means that opportunities (job offers, clients, business deals, etc.) could be coming in from LinkedIn as well as external searches from the web. Make sure that your profile is optimized by using this step-by-step guide to help bring opportunities your way.

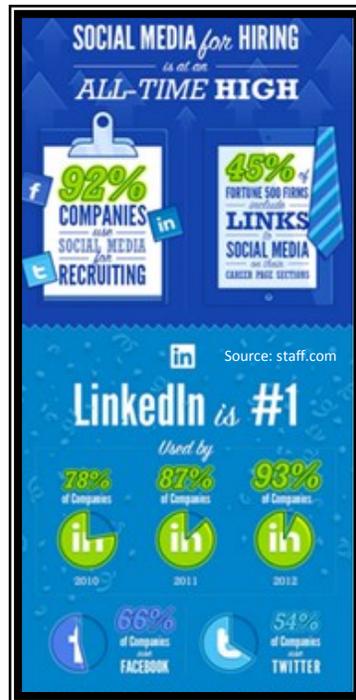
The amount and type of data stored by LinkedIn is mind-boggling, and there are infinite ways to slice it and dice it. To get started, put yourself in the mindset of recruiters and hiring managers: **How do YOU look? Can they even FIND you?**

THE RECRUITER MINDSET

Talking and working with college students, I've found that many do not understand the purpose of their LinkedIn Profile or who the target audience is for the information contained on their LinkedIn page. So here it is:

The purpose and target of your LinkedIn profile is to get recruiters (throughout this guide I use the term recruiters to refer to headhunters and HR professionals, although they do have somewhat different functions) to contact you.

These are the people who are looking for and hiring talent. When you write your resumé, you need to think about the employer's mindset. When you write your LinkedIn Profile, you need to think about the recruiter's mindset.



Recruiters have a goal: Find appropriate job candidates to interview and present to the hiring decision-makers to get the open position filled as quickly as possible. This means recruiters operate as both comparison shoppers and personal shoppers: Comparison shoppers because out of the thousands of possible job candidates recruiters are comparing one candidate to another; personal shoppers because they are searching to find candidates that fit the specific job description and company culture.

To succeed in finding the "right" candidates, recruiters set up their searches in such a way that they can make an "apples to apples" comparison. This is the reason for an accepted resumé format, job descriptions with specifications, employers' use of applicant tracking systems (ATS), and LinkedIn's use of a standardized profile format. These standards make it

possible for recruiters to go through numerous profiles to find the information that identifies the "right" candidates. If you don't fit, you don't get past the first look. Recruiters are looking for key things (experiences, skills, accomplishments) and can do this easily and efficiently on LinkedIn, speeding up their process of finding candidates to interview. You can help them find you by tailoring your LinkedIn Profile.

That's how recruiters think. How do you to attract them?

The obvious, of course, is having the experience that the job description calls for. But really, recruiters are looking for more than that:

- Do you have the qualities—personality and soft skills—that fits with the culture of the employer's organization.
- Are you able to quickly adapt to the position and employer's organization to add value starting Day 1.

HOW LINKEDIN WORKS

- Proof of your experience, attitude and qualities. It's important to remember that, especially for college grads, you are hired for your attitude more than your skills. Skills can be taught.

Recruiters are looking for personality, attitude and experience. And there are ways on LinkedIn that you can prove all three of these things.

1. Your LinkedIn Profile picture needs to be a recent photo of you and, importantly, one that captures your character and how you want to present yourself to the employer.
2. A headline that shows your value.
3. A summary (your personal brand statement) that includes keywords and lots of white space.
4. A quantifiable work history with just enough detail to incorporate keywords that will get picked up in search results.
5. All the other relevant information you include in your Profile. Underscore "relevant." As a student, you can include papers, honors, courses, your GPA—but do this in the appropriate places.

Each of these components, or LinkedIn sections, builds your personal brand and tells your story. LinkedIn is formatted in just this order for a reason—it's in the shape of the letter Z. Our eye scans from left to right, down and across. This is how speed readers scan a page and, believe me, recruiters are speed readers—taking 12 seconds on average to review a resumé.

Fully completing these five components will help attract recruiters to your LinkedIn Profile.

KNOW HOW LINKEDIN WORKS

Before getting into the nuts and bolts of building your LinkedIn Profile, joining groups and making connections, you need to know a bit about how LinkedIn's search algorithm works so you can optimize your LinkedIn Profile accordingly.

LinkedIn's Search Algorithm likes connections and profile completeness. When you search LinkedIn, the results are, by default, sorted by relevance. Relevance is code for LinkedIn's

Proprietary Search Algorithm. I'm not an IT person by any stretch of the imagination, but I know this: You must have a Profile that is 100% complete or close to it, and you need to have first-degree connections—direct relationships with people. (More on degree and connections later.)

A Profile that's 100% complete means including a picture, having a headline and summary, work experience and education, and information in the other categories. Anything less than 100% completeness not only hurts you from a search-ranking perspective, it's also less-than-impressive to recruiters.

Keywords in certain sections rank higher. A LinkedIn Profile has many different sections, but LinkedIn's Search Algorithm likes some of them better than others. Keywords in your Headline, Summary, Company Name, Job Title and Skills rank higher in the search results. If these key fields are blank or filled with generic terms, then you fall to the bottom of the search rankings. (I discuss keywords and how to identify the ones most relevant to you and your job search further on.)

Write in the first person. Social media is all about engagement and relationship-building. Foster some rapport with the people who read your LinkedIn Profile by writing in the first person.

First-person language, such as, *"My experience as a clerk at the Chicago Board of Trade prepared me to work in fast-paced, deadline-driven and no-mistakes-accepted work environments,"* turns your Summary into a conversation, rather than a stilted, uncomfortable description like, *"Sam has worked as a clerk at the Chicago Board of Trade."*

The other benefit of writing your Summary in first-person is you can inject some energy and personality into your thoughts, showing recruiters why you'd make a great connection or employee:

"You might believe a research lab intern's job is to simply run and record tests results, but my primary responsibility was to develop a relationship with patients in the study to ensure, as researchers, we understood the emotional effect our work had on patients."

Add connections. The number of contacts you have ranks strongly in LinkedIn searches along with your skills. You need to start adding Connections (which helps your Profile become more "important" in LinkedIn's perspective), and you'll need to use keywords. One of my connections has 7,000+ connections, but this is a bit over the top. This is not a quantity race. You need quality connections you can leverage for your job search.

THE NUTS & BOLTS

Summary Section. Less is more. LinkedIn (smartly) limits the number of characters you can use. You need to concisely tell your story. It's a summary. Only the most important information is included, using appropriate keywords, a few sentences/a paragraph, and symbols to highlight the quantifiable information recruiters need. Look at a magazine print ad for effective use of white space. White space attracts the eye and is pleasing to look at. Also, when you include a lot of information, recruiters rightly or wrongly assume that's everything about you. If they don't see what they like, they move on to the next candidate.

Here's an example of an engineering major who finds Six Sigma and cost savings in job descriptions:

◀ Leveraged Six Sigma to identify error in benefit card issuing software program and realized a 31% cost savings by reprogramming default setting.

Work Experience. LinkedIn has structured this section in the accepted resumé format, but that doesn't mean it should mirror your resumé. You have some editorial control in how you describe what you did in your summer internship or job as a research assistant or TA. Whenever possible, highlight significant accomplishments/results, quantify if possible, and use symbols. Keep in mind the keywords you've already identified.

> As the first campus sales representative for University Tees, I generated sales of \$300,000 in the first year, exceeding the company's projected sales goal.

As with your summary, you don't include everything, just the relevant information in 1-to-3 bullet points focusing on your accomplishments that support your skill sets and make it easy for recruiters to read through quickly.

Education. Although this seems like a relatively straightforward section, you still need to ask yourself what is the most relevant information for recruiters? Employers looking for engineering majors and consulting firms often have a

GPA threshold, and therefore including your GPA if 3.0 and above is relevant. Having a leadership role in a sorority or fraternity or other campus club/activity is relevant to recruiters; just being a member is not.

Skills & Expertise. This is a relatively new Profile page section and a big win for you and recruiters. You can list all the skills (maximum is 50) you want to be searched and found on. But thinking back to how you built your headline and summary, only include skills that are relevant to the career and job you are seeking. You want to help recruiters focus on what's important and what you want them to know about you.

Endorsements. A LinkedIn endorsement is a great way to have your professional connections notice and value your skills and knowledge. Start endorsing others and they will return the favor in kind.

Recommendations. Unlike endorsements for skills, recommendations are a personal reference. It is appropriate for you to ask professors and former supervisors to write a recommendation.

All the other stuff. To attract college students, LinkedIn added sections to give space to expand your profile in areas that are relevant to recruiters looking for new professionals. Your job description and keyword research can help guide you on what to include. If you earned a special education certification include this in your summary and in the certification (not education) section. STEM-oriented majors include the writing course completed to signal to recruiters your communication skills. Humanities majors want to signal critical thinking and analytical skills in their summary and by listing relevant courses.

As you go through the other Profile page sections, remember you only want to include information that recruiters find relevant. LinkedIn is not Facebook.

- Is the information relevant?
- Have I used the appropriate keywords to tell my story?
- Am I endorsed for skills?
- Do I have recommendations?

GET THE MOST OUT OF LINKEDIN

Your LinkedIn Profile is just the first step in building your professional network and launching your career. You can use LinkedIn to:

- Research companies
- Learn about career paths
- Prepare for interviews
- Get introductions and referrals
- Make professional contacts
- Find jobs/internships
- Follow thought-leaders

LinkedIn is a strategic imperative for launching your career. Yet, from talking and working with college students and recent grads, I know using LinkedIn often stops with building a profile. There's more to LinkedIn, and the best weapon in your job search is LinkedIn groups.

LINKEDIN GROUPS

LinkedIn has sprouted close to a million groups, and allows you to join up to 50, although joining 50 defies the effective job-search strategy of focusing your time and effort targeting career fields and employers. This targeting approach holds true for LinkedIn Groups. Think about it this way: How many of your 1,000+ friends on Facebook do you have engaging conversations with in the way you do with your close friends? Exactly. To make the most of your job-search time, adopt a deliberate and targeted approach when joining LinkedIn Groups, and then use them to work for you.

By searching through LinkedIn Groups, you will discover groups in your career field and groups associated with employers. Before joining, check to see the size of the membership and the activity level. LinkedIn provides this information. Small and less active groups do not provide the best opportunities for you. Once you find your groups, apply to join in. Some are open groups in which anyone can join, and others require the group administrator to approve your request. Either way, once you're in, you're in—and you can begin information gathering and networking. (More on that later.)

- The first group to join is your university-sponsored group and then additional relevant university groups. For example, Washington University in St. Louis has 143 LinkedIn groups. The school has slightly more than 7,000 undergrads and just fewer than 7,000 grad students. That's a lot of groups for a school that size.
- Join professional organization groups relevant to your career field. Generally, these groups require organization membership to join the LinkedIn group, but you can email the group administrator noting your student status and asking if membership can be waived. There is a good chance that someone in that group will be working for the company you want to work for.
- There are also special interest groups in your career field you can join to track industry trends.
- And there are groups targeted to job-seekers and searching.

The groups you've joined will appear on your Profile page. You only want to show the groups that are relevant to recruiters. For example if you joined a job-hunt group, I recommend you turn off the logo. Logos and frequency of receiving emails from groups are controlled via the Account Setting function.

As a group member, you can view the member database, follow and comment on discussions, and more. The "more" includes the professional relationship-building you can do.



MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES

Learn from your network. Engage in your community.

LinkedIn ranks discussions within groups (based on member participation in the discussion) and the most popular discussions appear at the top of the group discussion page. These are topics members are most actively engaged in and ones you want to weigh in on, either by responding to existing comments, providing an insight or opinion, or by asking a question to generate more comments. You have the option to "Like" or "Share" discussions, or just be a quiet observer, although that defeats your purpose of joining the group—to find and be found.

Start a discussion to get feedback. *"I'm graduating in four months and looking for a job. Please contact me,"* is not a discussion topic or an effective way to network. Discussions should benefit every member of the group. Go back to prior popular discussions: What topics have started active participation with members? If you're engaging members of the group with the discussions you initiate, you'll have the opportunity to be recognized as a "Top Influencer" in the group page sidebar, which can help you build visibility and authority within the group.

When you've made an important connection with a group member, take it offline. This is easily done by replying privately and/or sending an invitation to connect. An invitation to connect with people you do not know must be personalized. Do not expect to connect using the LinkedIn default message.

Mining the LinkedIn member database. One-click networking invitations fall short when trying to reach people. Instead, you need to engage professionals on a more personal level. This includes getting introductions to people outside of your network who can help you with your career. You need to know who and how to ask.

LinkedIn groups people in your network by 1st (direct/primary relationship), 2nd and 3rd degree connections (you're both members of a group, and/or a direct relationship knows the person directly or through a group). Because the relationship tree can be difficult to figure out, focus on your 1st and 2nd degree connections.

Jacob Crows
Associate at Sard Verbinen & Co



When asking for an introduction, make it easy for your 1st degree contact by mentioning how you'd like to be introduced and the reasons you need help, writing out the introduction to be forwarded, and providing something in return for the effort. Networking works best when both parties can offer the other something useful.

Groups are a way to contact 2nd degree LinkedIn members directly. But don't join a group and start contacting individual members without participating in the group's discussion. You could get ejected from the group by the moderators. You have a 300-character message you can send. Here's are examples of the right way to make a group 2nd degree connection.

"I saw your profile in the Marketing Group and thought it would be nice to connect. I graduated from University of Iowa, BA in cultural anthropology. My interest is to build a career in research and thought you would have advice and maybe even know of career opportunities. Do you have 15 minutes to talk?"

"I've been following XYZ Company. Through the ASE group I learned you are a director at the company. There's an open position that matches my experience. Do you have 15 minutes to talk with an IE graduating senior?"

"I'm interested in learning more about XYZ Company. Through the U of Wisconsin group I found that you were an associate there. I'm certain I would be a good fit for the company and there is a position that matches my experience. Do you have 15 minutes to talk with a Wisconsin graduating senior?"

Once you've established a regular dialogue, take the relationship offline as soon as you can.

Follow companies. Many companies now have a LinkedIn page with an option for you to follow the company and receive updates, news, white papers and more. You'll also be able to see a company's employees, their LinkedIn Profile, and if you have 1st or 2nd degree connections. You also have an opportunity to participate in discussions.

Follow career fields (LinkedIn calls these channels) and thought-leaders. You can get exclusive insights and professional advice from top industry-leading professionals sent directly to your in-box.

LinkedIn for Education. This feature promotes colleges and universities to prospective students. However, it also includes two useful functions for job-seekers: a tab to find alumni, and one to find jobs and internships. If your school doesn't have a page yet, check regularly.

BE POLITE.
BE SMART.
BE COURTEOUS.
BE GRACIOUS.

We can't leave this LinkedIn guide without a discussion on etiquette and account settings.

LinkedIn Etiquette. Web etiquette, or "netiquette," is not a new idea. Most website and online communities state their policy before you join. LinkedIn warns against trying to connect with strangers with a notice that reads: "Connecting to someone on LinkedIn implies that you know them well ... recipients can indicate that they don't know you." LinkedIn will then require you to enter an email address with each invitation.

If you're going to use LinkedIn, use it well. Be polite. Be smart. Be courteous. Be gracious.

To make a good first impression on LinkedIn, keep the following in mind.

- It's about quality over quantity. Before you click the "Add to my network" button, know what you'd like to get out of the connection.
- Try to find a mutual contact first. Your invitation to connect will be accepted when it comes through a mutual contact.
- Treat making a connection as you would a face-to-face meeting. Don't just go with the default text, "I would like to add you to my network." You have 300 characters to introduce yourself and explain your reason for reaching out.
- Not everyone will want to connect. Wait a month to send a second request. Still no response; move on.
- Be aware of and follow group rules.
- Not everyone will agree with a point you've made; do not take it personally. And don't be nasty.

Account Settings. You can view your account dashboard by clicking on your photo appearing on the right side of the tool bar. This is where you control your settings, such as how visible you want to be, who can view your contacts, frequency of group emails, and more.

Everyone has a different point of view on privacy, and it's up to you to decide what you want people to see. But if you want to be found by recruiters and others, you need to ensure your visibility is set to "everyone." Do you want your connections to see your contacts? Some people take issue with that; I don't. My connections can view my contact list, but that doesn't mean they are connected, or that I will connect them when asked. When you are searching LinkedIn Profiles, do you want people to know it is you or do you prefer to be listed as "someone" or as a LinkedIn member?

LinkedIn is a key tool to make you visible in your job search. I recommend you let everyone know who you are and what you're up to.

LinkedIn is dynamic. Its features and functions are changing and improving, and more will be added. Building your profile and joining groups will get you started. The only way to really know how to make LinkedIn work for you is to get on, set up your Profile page, and start networking.



YOUR LINKEDIN JOB SEARCH CHECKLIST

LINKEDIN PROFILE

Photo

Add a professional-looking profile photo.

Headline

Stand out with a keyword-rich headline that describes how you want to be known.

Location & Industry

Add your industry and zip code to help recruiters.

Summary

Write a keyword-rich summary and use white space, borders, symbols and characters to make readable.

Experience

List all the jobs you've held, and include at least one accomplishment per job.

Skills & Expertise

Support your summary with key skills. LinkedIn provides an extensive list to select from, and include endorsements.

Education

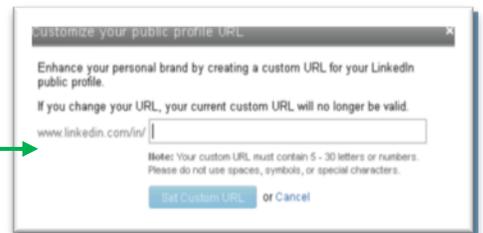
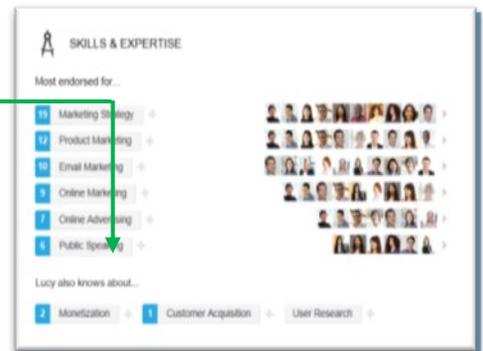
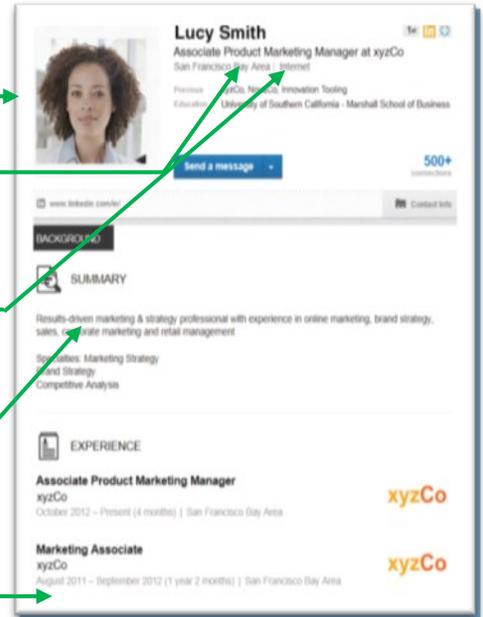
Add your school(s).

Recommendations

Get recommendations from professors, bosses and others who can speak to your work and character.

URL

Customize your profile URL (just your first and last name).



LINKEDIN GROUPS

Join groups

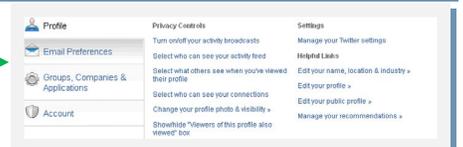
Choose those relevant to your career field, professional interest, alumni group, etc.



SETTINGS

Privacy settings

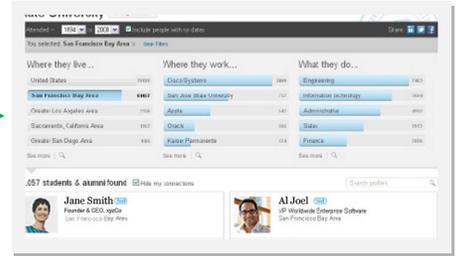
Control what others see about you and what types of notifications are sent out to your network—be sure you are visible.



YOUR LINKEDIN JOB SEARCH CHECKLIST

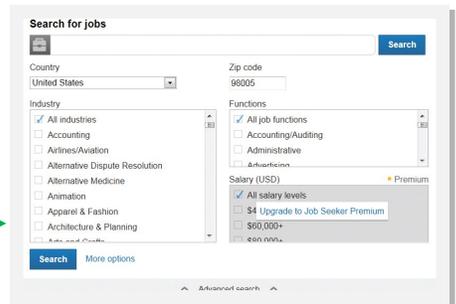
USING YOUR NETWORK

- Grow your network**
Search your contacts and find people you may know.
- Check out where your college alumni are working and reach out to learn more about the company.
- Ask for introductions through your network to get connected to people and companies you're interested in working for.
- Share updates with your network, e.g. articles, links or presentations.



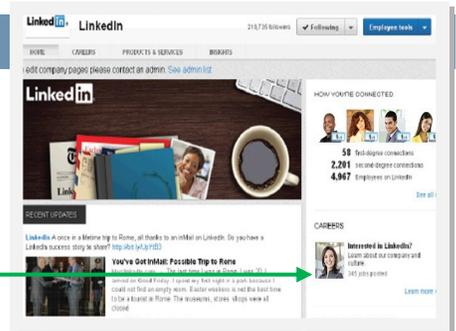
JOB SEARCH

- Sign up to get email alerts about jobs you may be interested in.
- Find jobs by keyword, title, company, zip code, function, industry and more using the advanced search tool.
- Sign up for saved email alerts to get automatic notifications about new jobs that meet your criteria.
- Discover jobs in your network. When possible, apply for jobs through the company's website.



COMPANY PAGES

- Learn about a company's products & services, latest news, employees, job opportunities and more.
- See how you're connected to each company through your 1st and 2nd degree connections.



EDUCATION PAGE

- See stats on employees, including where they worked before and after that company.
- Follow companies you're interested in to get alert updates.
- Check out your school's LinkedIn page to connect with alumni.
- Search to find jobs posted through your school's network.



Jane Horowitz has championed college students in their job searches from colleges and universities across the country, and with majors from engineering to fine arts, from computer design to banking. Jane has made a measurable and lasting difference in college students' lives.

