# IT PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: ASSIGNMENT 1

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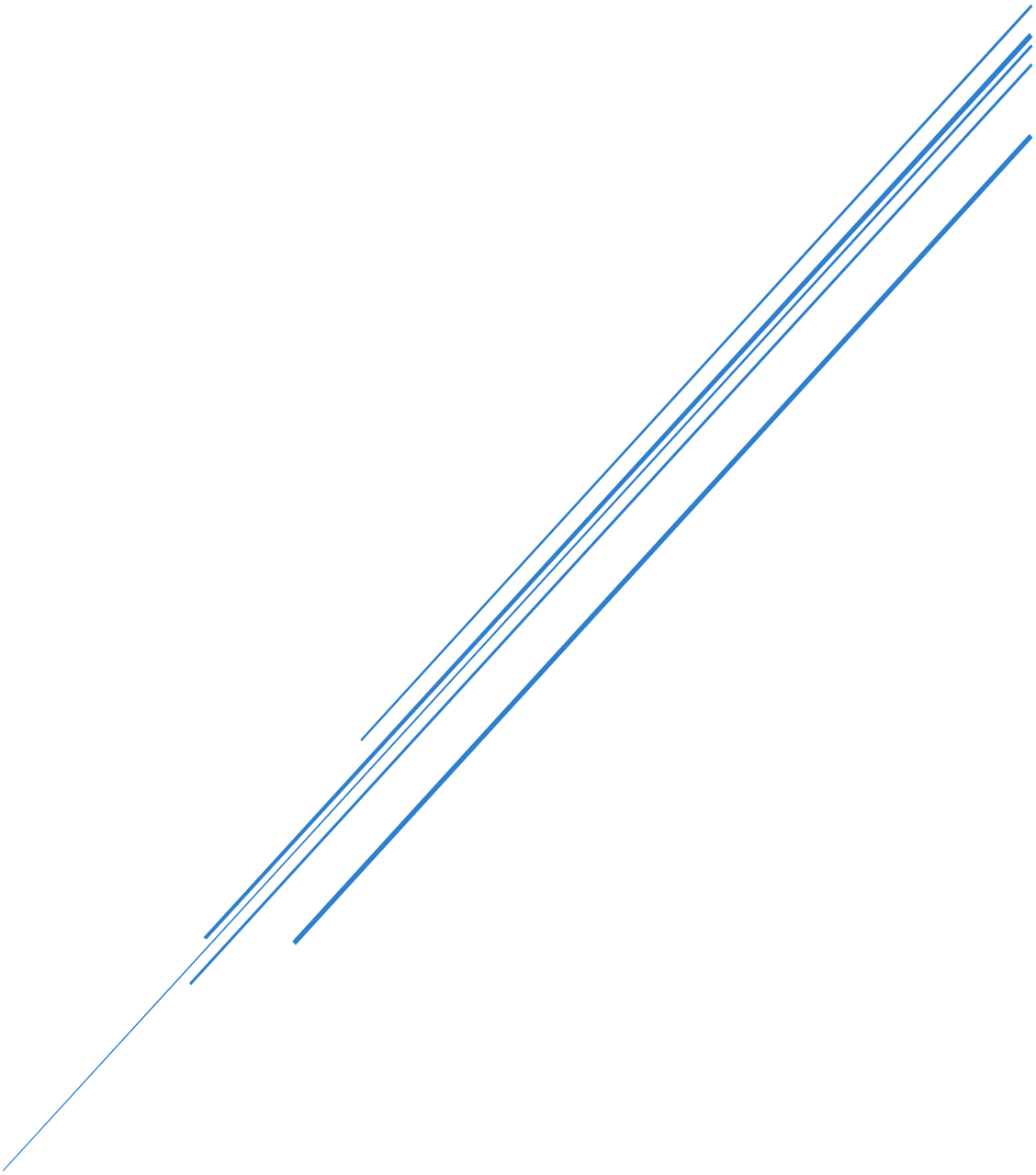

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# Question 1

1.1)

- The link to my LinkedIn account is: **linkedin.com/in/kandyce-smit-5927a8358**. I developed my LinkedIn profile to be effective and professional by following the guidelines provided in the assignment resource. (Learn How To Become, 2023).

1.2)

1.) Carla Johnson's LinkedIn profile (LinkedIn, 2025) is, in my opinion, very effective for a multitude of reasons that contribute to convey expertise, credibility, and influence.

- **A strong, interesting headline:**

  Her headline states that she is a Keynote Speaker, 10x Author, and Innovation Architect; she immediately establishes authority with a headline like that and uses emojis, too, in a way that is engaging but not overly casual or unprofessional which is a nice touch and reflects her personality in a professional brand.

- **Persuasive "About" section:**

  The "About" section reads like a story and is interesting to read; it positions Carla as a thought leader in her industry and articulates her philosophy, approach toward innovative thinking, and results she has achieved with clients. The language used is persuasive in that it clearly shows passion and expertise, while at the same time enticing readers to stay engaged and continue reading through the profile.

- **Comprehensive, detailed experience section:**

  Her work experience isn't overly general, and shows progression, and measurable career accomplishments. Each role Carla presented is clear enough to convey the contributions and impact each role represents yet unique enough to be able to show potential clients or employers how they would rely on Carla for a certain type of role.

- **Social proof through strong endorsements and recommendations:**

  Carla has over 50 recommendations and a multitude of endorsements for her skills. Her success stories from clients and colleagues provide social proof and support her credentials. It illustrates her expertise and evidence of follow-through to provide organisations and clients tangible results.

- **Evidence of thought leadership via publications and other media:**

Carla gives publications, videos, and links to other content she has created. This supports her role as an authority in her field, keeps her profile "alive" with dynamic content and highlights the ongoing impact she is making on the industry. It provides differentiation for her professional brand and overall influence.

The five aspects of an effective LinkedIn profile; engaging headline, authoritative summary, detailed experience, strong social proof, and visible thought leadership will combine into making Carla Johnson's profile highly professional, credible, and memorable.

2.) Although Carla Johnson (LinkedIn, 2025) has a profile that is very polished and engaging, there are certainly improvements that could be made.

- **Structure experience with headings or feature highlights:**

  Several of her experience positions have very elaborate descriptions. Headings or short bullets for key projects, prominent achievements or specific client results could help readers to skim through her roles and quickly identify her accomplishments.

- **Incorporate more visual content throughout the profile:**

  While she does have video and publications, using more images, slides or infographics within her profile sections, particularly on her keynote speaking or innovation projects, would have a greater impact visually and would make her profile more interactive.

- **Use measurable results in experience roles:**

  Including specific data, for example, number of organisations influenced, percentage of growth, or awards received, would more clearly show the results of her work and add credibility.

- **Position unique skills in one section:**

  She has many endorsements, but a short skills summary with the 10-15 most appropriate skills would give viewers a quick view of her core skills and make her profile more scannable to review.

- **Expand on thought leadership activity:**

  There are additional activities that would show more thought leadership, even though her publications are there, it would have greater impact with highlighting events she has spoken at, webinars she has led, workshops she has held (with links or media).

These changes would enhance the readability, visual appeal, and ability to clearly demonstrate Carla's achievements while maintaining her professional brand voice.

3.) The weakest aspect of Carla Johnson's profile (LinkedIn, 2025) is navigating through her endorsements and recommendations. The number of endorsements and recommendations alone shows credibility, but the overwhelming number can lose her most important skills for viewers looking to ascertain her value. She could group recognitions and endorsements into categories, mention her top 5-10 endorsements, or create a featured skills section for viewers to quickly focus on her key skills without overwhelming the power of an endorsement.

1.3) To whom it may concern,

I am writing to apply for the Software Developer position at IT Medical. I am a recent IT graduate of IIE Varsity College and have practical experience in programming and software development, computer networks, and information systems. My studies, along with practical projects on my GitHub account, have given me the skills needed to effectively contribute to software solutions that will be innovative and effective. I also have documented experience of my passion towards healthcare technology after completing the Harvard ATx: Human Anatomy – Musculoskeletal Cases course and my volunteer experience of helping at Netcare, allowing me to see first-hand how we can create technology to improve reality-based outcomes, especially in health care technology. I am excited to bring my passion for technology and expertise to your team working on meaningful software development.

# Question 2

The ethical and professional standards are very important when developing mobile banking applications that require the use of sensitive financial data. The IITPSA provides information and guides on how ICT professionals should act to be responsible and trustworthy to the public (IITPSA, n.d.).

The Institute of Information Technology Professionals South Africa (IITPSA) is the recognised professional body for ICT practitioners in South Africa that was established in 1957 and comes accredited as a professional body by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (IITPSA, n.d.). Its vision is that it strives to become an inclusive community of ICT professionals that leads and promotes the development of a prosperous digital society, and its mission is to lead the professionalism of ICT and drive ethical digital transformation (IITPSA, n.d.). The goals of the organisation are to advance the study, science and practice of ICTs; promote and maintain a code of conduct and ethics; define knowledge standards for professions; and to remould effective ICT policies in industry and government. Importantly, IITPSA is one of the leading voices in supporting professionalism and ethical standards within the South African IT sector, requiring their members to adhere to a strict Code of Ethics and Code of Good Practice that guarantees stakeholders, including ICT end-users, that they are dealing with fellow professionals who will conduct themselves with responsibility and professionalism. In addition to working with the ICT community, IITPSA also invests and supports the future of the ICT profession via programs like the SA Computer Olympiad, SA Computer Applications Olympiad and the Standard Bank Challenge, all of which together engage with tens of thousands of young learners every year. By partnering with SAQA and international bodies like IFIP's International Professional Practice Partnership (IP3) IITPSA also helps to set global standards and push forward lifelong learning and professional development, which will promote trust and professionalism of all South African ICT professionals (IITPSA, n.d.). Furthermore, studies also show that, in banking (relevant to projects that have potential to involve sensitive data), implementation of IT governance technologies will assist teams to move towards shared organisational goals, improve service delivery, and improve ethical business practices (ESCROWSURE, 2024).

Putting together the mobile banking application, the IITPSA Code of Ethics, ideally, would function in the software development lifecycle in various ways to guarantee ethical usage of financial data and compliance with standards of professional practice. I will outline three ways this application could be developed with the IITPSA Code of Ethics matters taken into consideration. Firstly, the principle of **respecting privacy and honouring confidentiality** could be applied in the design and testing phases of the lifecycle by implementing strong access controls, encryption, and anonymising customer data to prevent disclosure (IITPSA, n.d.). Secondly, with the principle of **avoiding harm** in mind, when developing and implementing the application, developers will want to be sure to test the application to surface any security vulnerabilities to ensure that bugs or systems failures do not lead to the compromise of a user's account or their financial transactions, while providing a means to report and mitigate any risks if they do exist (IITPSA, n.d.). Lastly, with the principles of **honesty, trustworthiness, and contributing to Society** in mind, the IITPSA encourages transparency with the end clients and users regarding the capabilities and limitations of a system (IITPSA, n.d.). The concern here is that the stakeholders involved in the decisions regarding the software are making socially

responsible decisions, with the software impacting the wellbeing of many stakeholders. For example, the developer could inform the user via notification when a sensitive operation, such as fund transfer, is being processed, and the user should be assured that there is no undisclosed costs or information presented in a way that could be misleading. Ethical considerations could be included in every phase of the lifecycle, from planning and coding through testing, and through deployment. If the developers take accountability to ensure the mobile banking app sustains professional integrity, and that public trust is maintained through compliance to the IITPSA Code of Ethics, it is quite important when a system is manipulating sensitive financial data in South Africa. The IITPSA Code of Ethics strongly acknowledges the case for protecting sensitive information, acting with integrity, while also emphasising the principles of privacy and confidentiality in critical applications involving financial transactions (Chipidza, 2025).

Following the IITPSA's Code of Conduct, which includes both the Code of Ethics and the Code of Good Practice, can improve the financial institution's reputation and the success of their mobile banking application immensely. Following principles, such as integrity and honesty, trust, fairness, respect for privacy, and confidentiality, indicates the mobile banking application's development team values professionalism and ethical behaviour (IITPSA, n.d.). These principles build trust with customers so that they are satisfied their personal records and financial details have been received responsibly. This trust is invaluable to an industry where security and reliability are at the forefront. Furthermore, if developers are guided by the principles set out by the Code of Good Practice, they are more inclined to act responsibly towards the public, avoid harm to the public, reduce the potential for discrimination, and promote the good of society, which all contribute positively to the institution's image within the public perception. The structure from the Code of Good Practice provides a clear way of thinking about making decisions in the case of probable conflicts of interest or ethical dilemmas, and helps to ensure the team is consistent, and covering any professional behaviours at every stage of the project. Ultimately, incorporating these ethical frameworks into the mobile banking application development processes builds trust with customers but also contributes to the long-term success and credibility of the mobile banking application, as they are more likely to access and recommend a product which they see as trusted and professional to others (IITPSA, n.d.).

Overall, following the IITPSA Code of Ethics and Code of Good Practice will help the developers keep data safe and act in a responsible way, which will also assist in developing reputation for the bank which will contribute to the success of the mobile banking application. (Chipidza, 2025; IITPSA, n.d.)

# Question 3

Today, digital connectivity is essential for education, work, and participating in society (Digital Divide Council, 2019). Not all South Africans can access the benefits of digital technologies equally. The digital divide, specifically between urban and rural communities, continues to be a barrier to accessing information, online services, and opportunities for economic participation (Global Citizen, 2021). It is important to understand the mechanisms of the digital divide if we are to develop practical solutions for inclusive digital participation (The IIE, 2025).

The digital divide is the gap in access to modern information and communication technology including mobile phones, PCs and the internet between individuals or communities, which creates unequal opportunities for participation in the digital economy and society (Digital Divide Council, 2019). In South African context, the digital divide is influenced by three main factors: firstly, unequal access to hardware, as even though mobile phone diffusion is relatively high, many households, especially in rural areas, do not have the basic infrastructure and devices like laptops or smartphones to connect effectively to the internet (Global Citizen, 2021). Secondly, the inequality of digital skills and the ability to use online tools effectively also significantly contribute to the inequality. Often, rural and under-resourced cities do not have the training to use the internet for education, employment, or improving their livelihoods, which justifies the need for ICT4D (ICT for Development) (The IIE, 2025). Lastly, internet affordability is a massive barrier, as South Africa is one of the most expensive countries for data access. For example, research shows that in the case of low-income individuals who are less able to afford internet access pay comparatively much higher costs for data access. This restricts their opportunities to participate equally in a digital space by accessing remote education and online work for example (Global Citizen, 2021). Together these factors show that the digital divide is not only having access to the internet but also affordability, adequate hardware and the ability to use technology appropriately and effectively, and all three of these factors contributed to worsening inequality for South Africa.

The absence of technical skills in rural communities often means that access to the internet does not represent full access to online services. Digital literacy is equally as vital as connectivity because without the ability to effectively use online resources and tools, many people are left without full access to opportunities in education, health and employment. For example, rural learners with no technical skills may have access to an online learning platform, but if they do not know how to use that platform effectively, they will likely fall further behind communities and peers who have better access to connectivity and up-to-date skills. Similarly, rural entrepreneurs may be using internet-enabled phones but may not know how to create a website, how to manage payments online, or how to use an ecommerce platform to develop and grow their businesses, stalling their economic development. Lack of skills inhibits access to applied essential services via the internet, such as applying for government grants or accessing telemedicine platforms, which require an understanding of basic navigation online. Without the scaling of digital literacy programs and projects, mere access to the internet will not solve the digital divide, and rural communities in South Africa will face barriers to participation in digital economies. (Mzansi ComNet, 2025).

One of the main obstacles for rural households in accessing the internet in South Africa is affordability. Even where mobile signal is available, affordability prohibits effective usage due to

high costs of data and devices. Research has shown that communication costs can take up as much as 22% of a rural resident's monthly income; thus, rural residents are often limited to purchasing small prepaid bundles where the costs per megabyte is higher than the post-paid contract price (Tshamano, 2024). This means that poor households end up paying for less of what they want and consequently risk becoming even further marginalised. Urban residents with unlimited internet access can utilise the internet for housing, education, healthcare, and applications for jobs while rural users often can only access the internet for basic functions, specific to SMS or for intermittent browsing on social media and news (Tshamano, 2024), which means that they are kept excluded from opportunities for full digital participation given the limited functionality of the internet. This explains how affordability worsens issues of inequality and excludes rural South Africans from the benefits of internet access.

In advancing from Mkatazo village study, affordable devices and digital literacy were revealed as key barriers to functioning in the Internet space, and two practical actions can begin to close the digital divide in rural South Africa. Firstly, IT professionals can partner with local stakeholders to implement subsidised access to devices via community laptop or tablet lending libraries or subsidised by not-for-profits and/or government grants. This can lessen the financial burden of hardware purchases for rural residents to access digital platforms whether for educational purposes or services. The study reiterates that, without material access (such as affordable devices and better connectivity) no one can significantly change the status of a marginalised rural community (Mwansa, 2025). Secondly, establishing targeted digital literacy workshops hosted at local community centres can help address the skills gap. Local entities can offer training programs that cover basic computer use, mobile navigation and utilising online services, the ability to change access into meaningful engagement in the digital world would likely result. 66.2% of respondents from a rural area reported they had the skills to develop their digital literacy, indicating that upskilling is critical to change access into connected empowerment (Mwansa, 2025). Through awareness of the core structural barriers, affordability of devices and the knowledge and skills gap, these two actions can enable rural users to shift from merely having access, to making productive use of digital technologies.

To address the digital divide in South Africa, we need to address affordability, access to devices and digital skills (Mwansa, 2025; Tshamano, 2024). Initiatives such as subsidised devices/solutions and digital literacy training would assist rural communities to actively participate in the digital economy. Tackling physical and skills-related barriers in South Africa will bring us closer to making sure that internet access is beneficial for all citizens and not worsening inequities (Digital Divide Council, 2019).

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