LINKEDIN & ONLINE BRANDING

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AGENDA

- Understanding online branding

- How to build a great LinkedIn Profile

- Introduction to Informational Interviewing

- How to Use LinkedIn to Effectively Search and Secure Informational Interviews

Online Branding: What Is It?

Online branding is the process of creating a distinct and consistent digital presence.

It reflects your professional identity, values, and expertise across platforms like LinkedIn.

Why Online Branding Matters

- Helps you stand out in a competitive job market.

- Builds trust and credibility with employers and peers.

- Supports career growth and networking opportunities.

Building Your Personal Brand on LinkedIn

Use a professional photo and branded banner.

Craft a compelling headline and summary.

Share content that reflects your expertise and interests.

Engage with others through comments and posts.

Examples of Strong Online Branding

Example 1: 'Tech Innovator | Speaker | AI Advocate' with regular posts on emerging tech.

Example 2: 'Healthcare Leader | Equity Champion' sharing articles and thought leadership.

Example 3: 'Creative Director | Storyteller' showcasing portfolio and client testimonials.

What is **LinkedIn** ?

LinkedIn is a *professional* social network for people to connect with colleagues and business associates. It also offers a job search, events information, special interest groups and messaging facilities.

DID YOU KNOW?

94-97 percent of employer recruiters utilize LinkedIn to find candidates for jobs according to (Source: LinkedIn)

6 people are hired through LinkedIn every minute (source: LinkedIn) (roughly 3 million annually)

LinkedIn's prediction of a **150% increase in remote job postings by 2025** aligns with the fact that **around 15%** of U.S. LinkedIn roles are remote or hybrid, attracting a significantly disproportionate **75% of applications**.

Building a Great LinkedIn Profile *Checklist*

- How to build a great profile?
  - Use a professional **Profile Picture**
  - Write a good **Headline**
  - List your **Education** and **Experiences**
  - Build a strong **Network**
  - Use keywords in adding **Skills**
  - Create your own **LinkedIn URL**

Profile Picture Dos & Don'ts

Do	Don't
Use a recent photo	Make it a party photo
Look personable	Upload a photo with someone else cropped out
Keep it simple – neutral background	Include children, friends/spouses or pets
Wear clothing appropriate to your industry	Wear a hat or sunglasses
Have photos taken from elbows up	Look away from the camera

Profile Pictures
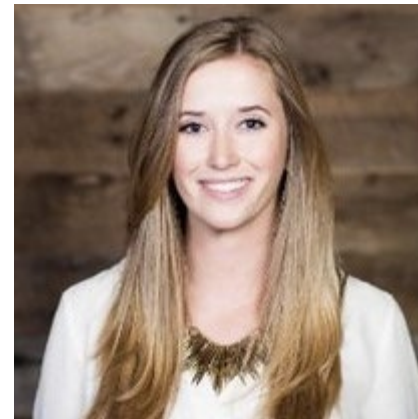
Headline

- Your headline is the 1 - 3 lines underneath your name.

- You have 220 characters including spaces for your headline.

- Write a headline that contains a *benefit to the viewer* that you want them to know about yourself.

- Use keywords others might use when searching for individuals interested in your field.

- Use commas or vertical bars (|) to separate phrases.

- Avoid using all uppercase letters.

Headline

- **Your LinkedIn Headline = Your "calling card"**

- **Short, memorable professional "slogan"**
  - **What you're excited about now and what you want to do in the future or what your current expertise are** **Example(s):** Gadget Lover and Aspiring Engineer

    Art Advocate | Aspiring Graphic Designer

    Experienced Healthcare Professional | Honors Student | Health Equity Advocate

    Seasoned UX/UI Designer | Tech Geek | Marathon Runner

LET'S PAUSE:
PRACTICE WRITING YOUR HEADLINE

Summary

- Make it personable!

- Don't make it too long (within 2,600 characters)

- This is where you provide an overview of your background and aspirations.

- Share key accomplishments and goals concisely to capture attention and showcase your value.

- **Proofread, Proofread, Proofread**

- LinkedIn Talent Blog highlights some great examples here

Summary – Continued

Accomplishments

- List your accomplishments
  - IT professional with 1 year of experience designing applications using Java and Python
  - Previous background includes working as a project manager for three years; monitored tasks of all team members and ensured project deadlines were met.
  - Eager to utilize the skills gained in my previous experiences to contribute to the goals of a company by helping them enhance their Information Technology applications
  - Proactive team player with a can do attitude looking to become part of a team
  - Honors student with 3.84 GPA led Engineers without Borders on service trip to Puerto Rico
  - I am inspired by creativity, diversity and sharing ideas
  - I participated in three triathlons in three states. I led my team to win second place in an engineering competition for my university that included 40 state colleges.

What inspires or energizes you

LET'S PAUSE:
PRACTICE WRITING YOUR SUMMARY.

LinkedIn Work Experience Section vs Resume

Resume: contain **detailed** descriptions of your tasks and achievements

LinkedIn: a summary that highlights your main achievements

LinkedIn Job Description – 3 Steps

Copy and paste	Copy and paste the bullets from your resume over to a new word document
Select	Select major achievements (quantifiable if possible) and remove the rest of the content.
Take	Take what's left over and link them together in 1-3 sentences.

Education & Experience

Major, degrees earned, classes you took/take, skills you developed

Organization, Achievements, Honors, Clubs, Volunteers, Internship

What did you accomplish?

20% of hiring managers in the U.S. say they've hired someone *because* of volunteer experience

USING LINKEDIN TO YOUR ADVANTAGE: INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

What is an Informational Interview? Informational Interview vs Job interview

- For informational interviews, YOU are asking the employer the questions. In a job interview, the employers asks YOU the questions.

- In an informational interview, you are not interviewing for a specific job. It is a networking tool to find out if there any OPEN jobs or if you could get a referral, learn industry insights, gain industry knowledge, and build rapport. In a job interview, you are interviewing for a specific role that is currently open.

- Informational interviews are one of the first steps to building a professional relationship with an employer. Job interviews can be used for the same purpose, but often, informational interviews are less formal than a job interview.

Business casual is fine but dressing up to impress is also perfectly fine.

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Be polite and try to avoid using colloquial language. Although it is less formal, use professional language and not language you would use to talk to a friend.

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Offer to conduct a video chat with the employer

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Be prepared! Do research on your contact/industry and have questions ready.

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Respect your contact's time! Keep your conversation within the time you suggested (20-30 minutes).

Best Practices for Informational Interview

FIND EMPLOYERS ON LINKEDIN

Informational Interview Request _ ⤢ ✕

Recipients

Informational Interview Request

Dear [employer name],

My name is [your name] and I found your information through LinkedIn. I have a passion for [industry] and would love to learn more about [industry/field].

May I have 20-30 minutes to ask you about your experience working at [company name]?

I recognize this may be a busy time for you, so if we are unable to connect, I'll try to reach out to you next week to see if that is more convenient.

Warm regards,

[Your name]

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Follow Up

Send a thank you email no less than 24 hours after your informational interview.

Every few months, feel free to reach out to ask about job openings/internships or send your contact information that might be of their interest (events, workshops, other job openings, etc..)

HOMEWORK

Using what you learned in this workshop, find 3 employers in an industry that you are interested in who are decision makers/potential hiring managers and set up information interviews with them.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

Please complete this brief survey: https://forms.office.com/r/sipxP7whbW

Follow us on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/strengthening-community-colleges/

Follow us on Instagram: cuny_scc

See you next time!!