

How to use LinkedIn

BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Tips to build an effective Professional Profile on LinkedIn.

Professional Headline

This is the content that comes right underneath your name. What are those industry keywords or skill words, the things that we are targeting that would help us to make the professional headline more robust and more representative of who we are and where we are headed.

You can use 120 characters. Write an informative profile headline. Your headline should be a short, memorable professional slogan. An effective approach would be to :

a) *List your career goal or focus.*

b) *Highlight components of your work.*

Summary

Your Summary statement is like the first few paragraphs of your best-written cover letter — concise and confident about your qualifications and goals. We can include relevant work and extracurriculars. It's a 30-second introduction of yourself. Be sure to include industry related keywords.

Skills and endorsements

This is an important section to customize since others can "endorse" you. The first 3 skills will be listed (then a View more button will appear), so make those first 3 count! This section is the place to include keywords and phrases that recruiters search for. Find relevant ones in job listings that appeal to you and profiles of people who have the kinds of roles you want.

Profile Photo

A photo of yourself, in professional attire, is recommended. LinkedIn isn't Facebook. Upload a high-quality photo (your profile will be 7x more likely to be viewed) of you alone. No party shots, cartoon avatars, or puppy pics.



Sections-

These can be added to enhance your profile. Consider adding sections such as Projects, Courses, Certifications, Languages, Publications, and Volunteering Opportunities, include all your schools, major(s) and minor, courses, and study abroad or summer programs. Don't be shy — LinkedIn is an appropriate place to show off your GPA, test scores, and honors or awards. You can also add actual examples of your writing, design work, or other accomplishments on your profile, where you can share rich media or documents. What better way to sell your skills than to show employers exactly what you can produce? Media Links allow you to upload and/or link to media such as websites, video, and PowerPoints.

Experience Section

The Experience section is a version of your resume. Use targeted keywords and accomplishments.

Public Profile URL

Customize your Public Profile URL for use on business cards, resume, and in your email signature. To increase the professional results that appear when people search for you online, set your LinkedIn profile to "public" and create a unique URL.

Recommendations

Recommendations from past supervisors, coworkers, clients, vendors, professors, or fellow students, who know you well, enhance your profile. The best profiles have at least one recommendation for each position a person has held. Recruiters are most impressed by recommendations from people who have directly managed you.



TAILORING YOUR PROFILE

Till now we have seen the different sections and information we need to fill, but what and how should we fill our information to make it impressive, Let's take a look at that:

Get clear on your audience

Think about who you're trying to impress. Going after a high-tech start-up job? Write for entrepreneurial techie types. Unsure? Create a strong general profile that shows you're a professionally minded student who's eager to learn.

Use the headline to broadcast your ideal job

Your Summary headline doesn't have to be a job title. The best student headlines promote who you are and what you want to do after graduation. Stuff like "XYZ University honors student & aspiring public relations associate".

Post a Photo

Profiles with photos get viewed much more often than those without. Pick a professionally appropriate headshot of you alone.

Show some passion

A LinkedIn profile is more than a resume. You can tell a story and be bold. Win points with employers for your enthusiasm about the job you want. For ex., you might begin your Summary with: "I'm a budding journalist who can hit the ground running in a newsroom."

Include Keywords

Use keywords and phrases recruiters search for. Find examples from job descriptions you're going after, or profiles of people who have the jobs you want, and pepper them throughout the Summary and Skills & Expertise sections.



Be smart about adding sections.

Complete the profile sections designed just for students, such as Courses (for anything related to your desired industry), Volunteer Experience & Causes (to help round you out), Projects, Languages, Certifications, Organizations, and more.

Mention the most relevant experience.

The Experience section can and should include internships, extracurriculars, part-time positions, and volunteer work. But it's okay to leave off experiences you're no longer interested in or that don't fit with your current goals.

Join LinkedIn Groups that line up with your goals.

Group memberships appear on your profile, so even if you don't have experience, they show you're credible and are actively building a network in your desired field. Start by searching the groups directory.

Ask for recommendations and endorsements

Request recommendations from bosses or teachers. Ask them to mention specific qualities and skills that align to your career goals. Even a short rec is better than nothing! Any of your connections can now also endorse skills for jobs you want.

Check your work

As a final step, ask a career counselor, friend or family member to review your profile. Ask if your reviewer can describe your goal just by looking at your profile. If the answer is no, then go back to the top of this list and start making some amendments.

