## **Building a LinkedIn Profile**

Last week we looked at the correct format for a good resume and the information you should and should not include.

Your resume is the most important summary of your experience, qualifications and skills that you can share with a recruiter, but it’s not the only collateral you should have at your disposal.

[LinkedIn](https://linkedin.com/) is a networking site that lets you connect with new and existing contacts and establish an online professional presence. Many people use LinkedIn to assist in their job search and find professional mentors.

### **Why use LinkedIn?**

LinkedIn is a visual online resume which is searchable by ATS (if you allow), hiring managers, recruiters, potential mentors, and peers. You can be proactively approached about opportunities.

You can use LinkedIn to search for jobs, compare yourself to other candidates, conduct outreach for applications, and prepare for interviews.

**If you don’t have a LinkedIn profile,** [**create an account**](https://www.linkedin.com/start/join) **now.**

### **What should you include in your profile?**

You should think of your LinkedIn profile as an extended, digital resume. Your profile is not space-limited, but it still needs to be somewhat curated and skimmable.

You should include all your work experience, education and projects, as well as a photo. It’s a good idea to search for profiles of other software engineers to find good examples!

For a full checklist, and example language, work through [our full LinkedIn worksheet!](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NgOOqmOlYDujxuZtFk3o775V9osLYuaTWRDS23tbsXI/edit#heading=h.a6zf6udxi9hp)

### **Best Practices for LinkedIn Content**

#### **Profile Picture and Header Photo**

Your profile picture should depict you as a potential employee. It should be a recent photo of just you (no group shots), with good lighting and wearing clothes that match the industry (you don’t need to wear a suit). Most people’s photos focus on their head and shoulders.

Check out this [guide to taking a good LinkedIn photo with your phone](https://www.wired.com/story/how-to-professional-headshot-smartphone-camera/).

You can also upload a header photo which depicts a landscape, city or activity you enjoy.

#### **Headline and Featured**

Your headline should include your target job title. You can also include up to two additional identities or titles, or reference specific skills/languages. You should **not** say “actively looking” or “aspiring”; it’s unnecessary.

Some example headlines:

* Software Engineer Intern @ Bloomberg | VP of NSBE @ TAMU | Code + Create + Coffee
* Tech Fellow at CodePath.org | Software Engineer | Community Organizer
* Mission-Driven Software Developer | Women In Tech Chapter Leader | CodePath Alum
* Machine Learning Engineer Intern | CS @ TAMU ‘25 | All things ML, Computer Vision, & NLP

The featured section should include links to your GitHub, portfolio and any prominent projects. Don’t link to your resume as all the information should be covered on your LinkedIn profile.

#### **About section**

Your summary should include your career goals, a few of your past achievements, and the technical skills you have.

You can find some examples in our [LinkedIn worksheet](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NgOOqmOlYDujxuZtFk3o775V9osLYuaTWRDS23tbsXI/edit#heading=h.xebngrei7xow).

#### **Experience**

This is the main section of your profile. Add any recent experience you’ve completed (including pre-internship programs or internships), along with details for each role:

* Copy and paste bullet points from your resume and remember to add any relevant links. This [LinkedIn formatting guide](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/1237/formatting-text-or-adding-links?lang=en) may help.
* For experiences that are less important, you don’t need to add bullet points under the experience header.
* When you add a company or organization, look for its name and logo in the search box and link to the company’s own profile. This means more people connect your experience to the business.
* You can choose to list relevant, unpaid experience in the experience section if it taught you transferable skills. You should put “Project”, “Hackathon”, or similar, beside the title to make the nature of your role clear.
* If you include projects, make sure to include a description (for instance, “Built and published a functional Instagram-like Android app which allows users to share photos with friends and family”) and include a link to the Github repo.
* You do not need to distinguish between part-time and full-time positions unless you want to.

#### **Education**

You should include all significant educational experiences, including additional activities or training.

Be sure to link to your school’s own LinkedIn page. This makes it easier to form connections through current students and alumni.

Don’t forget to include this course!

#### **Volunteer Experience**

Any unpaid experience that is not relevant and doesn’t belong in the traditional experience section should be included here.

#### **Skills and Endorsements**

LinkedIn users search for people by the skills they have. Including your technical skill set makes it easier for people to find you for opportunities. You should add all relevant skills to this section and be sure to prioritize your top 3 most relevant skills.

Skills like “Java” will mean you appear in the search results for technical recruiters looking to fill roles. If you don’t know what skills to include, look at the profile of someone whose job you want.

#### **Recommendations**

Recommendations are a great way to demonstrate your skill set. They provide validation of your capabilities and acument from someone who has seen your work first hand.

If you do amazing work in internships, projects or during work experiences, or if someone provides you with positive professional feedback, consider asking them to write a quick LinkedIn recommendation for you.

### **Extra tips**

There are a few additional things you can do as soon as you set up your profile to help you get the most out of your account:

* **Obtain at least 50 connection:** This may sound overwhelming, but it’s easy to hit this number (and higher!) by connecting with classmates, former coworkers and supervisors, professors, and even family members. By increasing your connections, you extend your LinkedIn network which makes your profile easier to find.
* **Customize your URL:** Having a [customized URL](https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/87/customize-your-public-profile-url?lang=en) makes your profile link easier to remember, neater, and more intentional for using on application documents and online profiles.
* **Follow Companies:** On LinkedIn, you can follow companies that you’re interested in learning more about. This enables you to receive updates from the company on job openings or posts. On each company page, you may also see suggestions of “similar companies” and suggestions to help further your search. Don’t forget to [follow CodePath](https://www.linkedin.com/company/codepath-org) too!