

Building an Effective LinkedIn Profile

STEPS:

1. Custom Vanity URL and Contact Information

A URL such as www.linkedin.com/in/yourname can be added to your resume, business cards, and professional looking email signature. This can be changed by clicking **Edit public profile and URL** to the right of your page. Be sure to only include websites that demonstrate your professionalism or display your work. Most importantly, do not link your Facebook!

2. Professional Looking Photos

Remember that LinkedIn is not like other forms of social media, first impressions matter! Dress as if you would for an interview and have someone else take the photo (no selfies!) on a high-res camera. The photo should be of just yourself (plain background without distractions), make sure it shows your head, shoulders, and face clearly (not covered by hair). Look approachable!

3. Custom Headline

This is the first thing someone reads on your profile. Think of the headline as a slogan for your professional brand, such as "Recent honors grad seeking healthcare administration position". Check out the profiles of students and recent alums you admire for ideas and inspiration.

4. Summary

Your summary statement is an extension of your headline. It should resemble the first few paragraphs of your best-written cover letter –concise and confident about your goals and qualifications. If you are seeking a job, say so and name the industry. Use short blocks of easy-to-read text. Your summary should make employers want to read more about you.

5. Experience –Both Paid and Unpaid

Make sure to list your experience from most to least relevant. Include jobs, internships, volunteer work, and community service. Describe each in terms of transferable skills that could apply to a new job in your field. Use action words (think resume) when you list your job responsibilities. Add numbers/facts to enhance this section. Rather than just say it, display it by uploading work samples, images, videos, and links to relevant websites.

*If your resume has been updated, proofread and approved by a SPPHS career ambassador peer advisor and it highlights skills that apply to your future, then there is no need to alter the experiences from your resume to your LinkedIn profile. If you are still unsure about which skills to use, or how to layout your information in the most appealing way, come seek help in Arnold 117. See above link for office hours.

6. Education

List your educational institutions in reverse chronological order. When adding your degree to your page, make sure to specify BS or BA. If your GPA is a 3.0 or above, feel free to include it. . Enter any extracurricular activities you participated in while attending school. Also list any clubs or organizations you belonged to (including any officer positions you held in those clubs) and any societies you joined or were given membership to, such as honor societies, fraternities, or sororities.

7. Student Friendly Sections (Accomplishment Sections)

Add an accomplishments section (can be added to the right of the page under "add profile section") to highlight advanced coursework, projects, awards, languages, test scores, volunteerism, etc. Volunteerism is cited by 1 in 5 hiring managers as highly desirable. If you have limited work experience, coursework and other such items matter a lot. Don't forget to add organizations that you were a part of, especially if you had a leadership role in said organization.

8. Skills and Endorsements

Google the name of your desired industry and “core competencies”. Use the phrases you find to add, truthfully, to your Skills section. Use the most popular terms *already* used on LinkedIn. Stick to 20 skills max. Your connections can click their agreement to support (endorse) each of your claims. Endorse your connections, and they will likely return the favor. Remember to update your skills section by moving your most endorsed skills to the top.

9. Upload a Current Resume

When you’re searching for jobs, **Easy Apply** is an option where you can apply directly to the job through the LinkedIn website, not the employer’s. When a job posting has this option, you click Easy Apply. An option will come up to attach your resume to the job application. Once you attach it for one application, it will save and you will now have the option to click this resume for the next Easy Apply job posting. Not all jobs have this Easy Apply option, but rather take you to their websites and have you apply through them.

TIPS:

1. Join Groups and Follow Companies

Search the name of your field or industry and ask to join groups that are relevant to you and your area of interest by typing in the search bar. You can click the “more” drop down menu, and click groups or companies to narrow your search. Search for and follow a company at which you may someday work, or are interested in applying to. When you log into LinkedIn your homepage will show a personalized newsfeed of content posted by the groups and companies you chose to follow. Joining a group allows you to have access to everyone in that group who would not normally be in your network. Be sure your profile is stellar before you ask to join a group!

2. Participate

Don’t link to everyone you know. Look up those who have contributed to your professional success thus far: students, teachers, employers, internship supervisors, etc. Connect with this core group and build outward. Profiles with 50 or more connections become more visible in search results. Tactfully comment on an article posted in a group you follow. Others will read it and may click to see your profile as well. Be a good citizen of your group and encourage people to learn more about you. Be smart about what you post and comment on.

3. Job Searching

Click **jobs**, the briefcase icon, in the top tool bar next to home and my network. In the search bar type your field or the title of a position you’re interested in, in the search bar. Next, you will see where you can enter a location. Here you can specify a region where you would like your job search to be focused around. To best find jobs that undergraduates qualify for, set your experience level to entry level and/or internship. Under the LinkedIn Features tab, you can specify jobs that have the Easy Apply option, jobs that have had under 10 applicants apply, and/or jobs that have individuals in your network.

4. Alumni Networks

In the search bar type “University of Massachusetts Amherst” or “UMass Amherst”. By clicking the universities page you will then have the option to follow this page and have access to alumni. Next to the follow button, you will see “see alumni”. You can select parameters based on geography, industry, and even individual organizations. Once you’ve narrowed your search down as much as possible, you can scroll down to the bottom of the page and check out the people who match your terms. Adding these connections or reaching out and messaging an alumni expands your network but also can give you an insight on a place of work you are interested in or a career path you are considering pursuing .

