

LINKEDIN GUIDE

PURPOSE

LinkedIn is an online networking tool that is used to help market yourself, make connections with professionals in your field and conduct research on different companies and organizations that may inform your career decisions. LinkedIn can also be used as a job searching tool upon graduation and throughout your career. Unlike your resume, a LinkedIn profile contains additional information about you, your work experiences, and recommendations / endorsements that you have received from connections. The following tips and examples reflect some of the best practices when creating your LinkedIn profile.

BUILDING YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

When creating your LinkedIn account for the first time, you will be asked to complete the information section by section. The following are some examples of the kind of information you should include in each section.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Use your first and last name as it appears on your resume when completing this section. Make sure to include a Headline that describes your education, experiences, and interests in 120 characters or less.

In addition, be sure to use a professional email address. A professional email should include your first and last name in some combination. Your contact information will be displayed on your LinkedIn page. Only include information you are comfortable sharing online. Consider editing your privacy settings to make adjustments.

PROFILE PICTURE

Uploading a profile picture increases the likelihood that someone, including professional contacts and employers, will look at your profile. The picture should be a headshot (from your shoulders up) where you are dressed professionally, smiling, and in front of a nice background. The Office of Career Development is happy to help you take this photo.

EXPERIENCE

When completing your experience section, provide the appropriate information about each experience, just like you would on your resume. Unlike your resume, you have unlimited space to include information, so be sure to provide complete details about each experience. This includes the company's name, job title, start and end dates, and bullet points describing your experience.

SKILLS

You can also add skills to your profile. These could be skills you have gained through your coursework or your experiences. Your connections are able to endorse your skills in these areas, and you are also able to endorse others for their skills listed in their profile.

SUMMARY

Your summary is a chance to let potential connections and employers know who you are, what you are interested in, and what you have accomplished in 2,000 characters or less. When writing your summary, be sure to use key words to draw attention to your skills and interests. LinkedIn is searchable by keywords, so this is another way employers and recruiters can find your profile. Keep the Summary statement short and sweet, and utilize shorter blocks of text to make it easily readable.

Consider answering these questions when writing your summary statement:

- Who are you?
- What are your major accomplishments, ambitions, interests, etc.?
- How can you leverage your interests / skills / experiences in your industry of interest?

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Upload any supplemental documents that are relevant to you and your professional brand. This can include a resume, research paper, portfolio, blog, or any other example of previous professional work that you want to showcase. **Be sure to edit documents to exclude information you do not want displayed on the internet.**

QUICK TIPS FOR YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

When creating your LinkedIn account for the first time, you will be asked to complete the information section by section.

MANAGE YOUR PRIVACY SETTINGS

Only provide information that you are comfortable sharing on the internet when creating your account.

TURN OFF NOTIFICATIONS TO YOUR NETWORK WHILE BUILDING YOUR PROFILE

If you leave this setting on, any time you make any edits to your account, your LinkedIn connections will receive a notification that your profile has been updated.

DON'T IMPORT YOUR ADDRESS LIBRARY FROM YOUR EMAIL

When creating your account, you will be asked if you would like to import your contacts. This option will send a generic invitation email to your entire address book. There are other features you can utilize once you've created your account to connect with colleagues and send a personalized message with your invitation.

CREATE A PERSONALIZED URL

Create your URL by clicking "Edit your public profile." Remember to keep the URL professional, and include your first and last name. For example, www.linkedin.com/in/josephsmith

ENHANCING YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

After building your profile, there are several other areas of your LinkedIn that you may want to consider utilizing to provide additional information about your interests and learn more about potential industries or organizations. Doing this will also help you to establish connections with other professionals who have similar interests or skills.

SELECT YOUR INTERESTS

This feature allows LinkedIn to make connection and group suggestions to you based on the information you have provided. It also allows employers to see what you are passionate about. Think critically about what interests you share, as some areas can be considered controversial and could potentially screen you out for a position.

CHOOSE AN INDUSTRY

If you have a particular industry that you are interested in, this can be a great way to allow LinkedIn to filter out information for relevant jobs and posts that appear on your home page and in your suggestions. It can also help employers and recruiters who are searching within a specific industry find your profile.

FOLLOW ORGANIZATIONS, COMPANIES AND SCHOOLS THAT INTEREST YOU

The organizations you follow will appear on your home page, and you will be able to see their most up to date information. This can be especially helpful when looking to see if there are any job openings at a particular company.

KEEP YOUR PROFILE UP TO DATE AND PROOFREAD

As you work in new jobs or internships, have new volunteer experiences, or develop new skills, be sure to update your LinkedIn accordingly. Also, make sure you proofread all of your information each time you update.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Be sure that your profile is complete and ready to be shared before establishing connections on LinkedIn. Consider the following as you plan to make connections with your LinkedIn profile.

WHO SHOULD I CONNECT WITH?

Once your profile is in good shape, your next goal will be to begin to connect with friends, family, employers, faculty, and alumni to build your web of connections. These groups are all great examples of people who can help you as you move forward in your career journey, whether it be through providing advice on navigating their career field, endorsing your skills and qualifications, or connecting you with professionals from their own networks.

Remember, as you begin to make connections, early on it is most important to have quality connections over a large quantity. You may want to start by connecting with classmates, professors, family, and previous employers.

Only connect with people you trust and have something professional in common with you.

FINDING ALUMNI

As you are researching a particular field or company, it can be helpful to reach out to Salve Regina University alumni within that industry for advice and perspective. By using the “See Alumni” tool on each school’s LinkedIn page, you are able to view alumni and filter results based on their graduation year, industry, field of study, etc.

JOINING GROUPS

Groups can be a great way to connect with individuals who have similar interests, experiences, and passions. One great example of a group you may want to join would be for any honor societies that you may be a part of. There are several methods to join groups, including the Groups Directory, the search bar, Suggested Groups, and reviewing groups that your connections are a part of.

Be sure to evaluate the group prior to joining. Is it public or private? Are any of your connections also members? You will also want to consider the size and activity level of the group. Larger groups can open up more opportunities for networking and often have more frequent discussions.

USING LINKEDIN FOR LIFE AFTER SALVE

LinkedIn is a great resource for you to use as you make plans for your life after Salve, whether you plan to enter the workforce immediately or continue on for a graduate degree in your field.

JOB SEARCH

You can search for positions using a keyword, location, or LinkedIn’s recommendations for you. When searching, you can filter results to reflect the company size, location, or industry. You can also be proactive and set up email alerts when jobs become available that fit your search criteria or desired company.

When you have found a position, if any of your connections works at that company, LinkedIn will give you the opportunity to message that individual for a referral or to learn more about the organization prior to applying. Some companies will also allow you to apply directly through LinkedIn. If you aren’t quite ready to apply, but you don’t want to lose the job posting, you can save it so it appears on your “Jobs” page later.

GRADUATE SCHOOL SEARCH

Using the “See Alumni” feature can be extremely helpful when using LinkedIn for your graduate school search, as it allows you to see where various graduates from programs you are interested in end up being employed. You can also use this tool to reach out to current students and alumni to ask them about their experience and gain more insight into the programs. You can also review an institution’s profile to see various instructors and learn more about their research areas and class topics.

Remember, if you reach out to a student, alumnus, or instructor, be sure to send them a personalized note explaining your interest in connecting with them.