

Build a Professional LinkedIn Profile Tips Sheet

Think of your LinkedIn profile as an interactive business card. It's a summary of your professional experience, interests, and capabilities that is designed to attract the attention of recruiters and other network contacts.

- Craft an informative profile headline

Your profile headline gives people a short, memorable way to understand who you are in a professional context.

- Display an appropriate photo

Remember that LinkedIn is a professional networking site. If you choose to post a photograph — and we recommend that you do — select a professional, high-quality headshot of you alone in professional clothes and good lighting. This does not mean you need to go to a professional photographer to get the picture taken, but you want to keep in mind that this is for a professional profile picture.

- Develop a professional summary statement

Your summary statement should resemble the first few paragraphs of your best-written cover letter — concise and confident about your goals and qualifications. Remember to include relevant internships, volunteer work, and extra-curricular activities. Present your summary statement in short blocks of text or bullet points for easy reading.

- Fill your “Skills & Expertise” section

“Skills & Expertise” is the place to include key words that a recruiter or hiring manager might type into a search engine to find a person like you. The best place to find relevant keywords is in the job listings that appeal to you and the LinkedIn profiles of people who currently hold the kinds of positions you want.

- Show off your education

Be sure to include information about all institutions you've attended. Include your major and minor if you have one, as well as relevant classes and highlights of your activities. It's also appropriate to include study abroad programs and summer institutes. Don't be shy — your LinkedIn profile is an appropriate place to show off your strong GPA and any honors or awards you've won.

- Update your status

A great way to stay on other people's radar screens and enhance your professional image is to update your status.

- Create your unique LinkedIn URL

To increase the professional results that appear when people type your name into a search engine, set your LinkedIn profile to “public” and claim a unique URL for your profile (for example:

www.linkedin.com/in/yourname). This also makes it easier to include your LinkedIn URL in your email signature, which is a great way to demonstrate your professionalism.

- Join LinkedIn Groups

Joining Groups is a perfect way to show your desire to connect to people with whom you have something in common. Most students start by joining their university's LinkedIn group as well as the larger industry groups related to the career they want to pursue.

- Find and Follow Companies

Following companies on LinkedIn allows you to connect to a company on news, product information, industry trends, job opportunities, and view profiles of individuals that you are connected with that either currently or previously worked for that company.

Additional Resources:

LinkedIn Learning Center: <http://learn.linkedin.com/profiles/>

LinkedIn YouTube Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/LinkedIn>