

LinkedIn is a professional networking site, designed to help people make business connections, share their experiences and resumes, and find jobs. The site also offers a full-featured career board, where you can search for and apply for jobs.

Here are some tips to make your LinkedIn profile the best it can be:

Put in the Work

First and foremost, making a good LinkedIn profile takes effort! Take the time to perfect your profile and make it complete.

Have a Great Resume

Before you begin creating your LinkedIn profile, make sure you have a current resume or CV. Once your resume is up to date it should be simple to just copy and paste the information about all of your previous work experience into LinkedIn. If you need help creating or updating your documents make an appointment with a peer advisor at the Bissett Student Success Centre.

Use Every Section

On your profile click the “add profile section” and see all of the elements you can add to your profile from skills to volunteer experience to accomplishments and more! Try to add something to all of the sections (but never lie or exaggerate your experience, if you don’t have something to add, don’t make something up).

- Use the Skills section to list skills you want to be known for. This can be hard skills like coding languages or soft skills like customer service. Think about the career you want and which skills will be relevant to recruiters looking to hire in that field.

Get your Headshot

While getting a job *should* be all about the qualifications, but on LinkedIn having a professional looking headshot can take your profile to the next level. People like to put faces to names; In fact, profiles with headshots get 21 times more views and 36 times more messages! In your headshot dress professionally and look approachable- you want to look like someone people would want to work with.

- Don’t have a headshot? Visit the Bissett Student Success Centre for free LinkedIn headshots!

Have an Eye Catching “About” Section

The About section gives you the opportunity to place a short bio on your profile- use it wisely! On average a recruiter spends only 6 seconds looking at your profile, so making sure that your About section is eye- catching yet professional is key to making a good impression. Include what you do, use keywords that people could use to find you, and make it interesting.

Instead of: Recent graduate seeking experience in accounting

Try: Personal accountant and tax preparer with customer-centric focus and recent CPA certification

List Your LinkedIn URL on Your Career Documents

LinkedIn is a great networking tool, so make sure that you are listing it alongside your other contact information on your resume, CV and business cards. You can edit your LinkedIn URL by choosing the “Edit Public Profile & URL” button on the right side of your profile. Make it LinkedIn.com/in/YourName rather than the string of letters and numbers that are automatically generated to make it look more professional on your documents and make it easier for potential employers to find you.

Create a Big Network and Keep Your Profile Alive

Once your account is ready to go, make sure you stay active with your profile. Reach out to past employers, professors, classmates and alumni to build your network. You can keep connections strong by keeping your account active and commenting and reposting things your connections post.

How to Network on LinkedIn:

LinkedIn is made for networking so don't be afraid to do so. If you have a question or want advice from someone who you look up to, or who works for a company or in a position that you aspire to, it is perfectly appropriate to reach out, as long as you keep it professional! Before you start drafting a message make sure that you give their profile a full look over to ensure that your question is not already addressed and that they haven't included any requests on their profile to be messaged by a different means (like email) or not to be messaged at all.

In your message:

- **Introduce yourself:** In one sentence describe who you are, and how you know or know of the person you are messaging
- **Explain why you are writing:** After introducing yourself cut right to the chase and explain what you are looking to get out of the interaction with them. It is appropriate to ask for things like short pieces of advice, to ask to arrange an in person informational interview, to ask a question about what it is like to work in their field/ company, etc. Don't expect too much; It is unprofessional to ask for a job, to ask someone to put in a good word for you with their company or to ask questions unrelated to careers.
- **Say thank you:** At the end of your message make sure to offer a genuine thank you for reading.

Example of an appropriate LinkedIn message:

“Hi Ms. Herman, My name is [name], and I run a student-run website called [blog name] that seeks to empower young women to follow their dreams. I've been following your blog for quite some time now, and it's amazing to see how much it has grown over the past several months. Your blog really is an inspiration for my website, and I was wondering if you had any tips for growing your team while keeping the content quality up? We're hoping to expand soon and could really use some pointers. Thank you so much, and congrats again for running such a great website!”