
LinkedIn

Creating Your Profile

LinkedIn is a professional networking site that can be utilized as a powerful tool at every stage in your career. They are the largest professional online network with 450 million members around the world! LinkedIn's goal is to help unite professionals and make them more marketable, informed, productive, and successful.

CREATING A PROFILE

Your profile is where you describe your **career history, skills, education, interests, and accomplishments.** Although it sounds like a resume, it's not - it's more conversational and personal. You can also attach projects that demonstrate your abilities and include short recommendations from others.

First Step

Log in at <https://www.linkedin.com> and follow the prompts. You'll immediately be asked if you want to import your address book. **You don't.** You want to personally invite people to connect with you once your profile is looking good.

Choose a Photo

Your photo doesn't have to be a stuffy headshot, but it should be professional looking, and relative to the field you're interested in. Having a good photo makes you **seven times** more likely to have your profile looked at by others. *(See also – cleaning up your social media profiles)*

Create an Incredible Headline

At the top by your photo is your headline. Take advantage of this important spot and create a headline that makes you stand out and showcases your "*brand.*"

Examples: *Portland Bible College Senior - Passionate about alleviating poverty and social injustice;*
Portland Bible College Theology Major

Professional Communicator | Relationship Builder | Content Creator

Create a Custom URL

A custom URL is a short, clean, readable link that directs people to your LinkedIn profile. You can include this in your email signature, and on your resume and cover letter.

1. In the upper right hand corner of your profile, select **Edit public profile and URL**
2. Click **Edit public profile URL.**
3. Unless you have a common name, you probably want to have a URL that ends with your first name/last name. For instance: www.linkedin.com/in/JaneDoe



Summary

Next to your photo and headline, the summary is the most important element in your LinkedIn profile since it allows you to highlight your "brand" - your unique skills, abilities, and personality.

TIPS: Write in first person and be conversational. Tell a story. Share your accomplishments. Say something that isn't in your resume. If you're writing a longer summary, break it up with headers and/or bullets.

Experience

Consider this section as your online resume. This is a great place to continue telling your story. Be sure to include important keywords from your major/field (skills & abilities).

1. **Include all work, paid and unpaid**, including internships, summer jobs, campus employment, and significant volunteer work where you gained skills.
2. **Focus on accomplishments** instead of just listing duties and responsibilities. What are you most proud of regarding that position? Employers don't want to know just *what* you did, but *how* or *why* you did it.

Skills

This section provides an opportunity to load your profile with terms and phrases that a recruiter will most likely use to find someone with your background. Click **Add a new** skill and start typing a skill you wish to add and suggestions will appear. As a student, this list will not be big but it will grow as your professional experience grows. Consider the various terms a recruiter might use for the same skill, like "project management," "project coordination," and "program management."

Skill Endorsements

People who visit your profile can "endorse" your skills. An endorsement is an affirmation of your skills by someone in your network. Your skills will appear visually in order of "most endorsed" to "least endorsed." Since it's easy to give and get endorsements, they're not seen as being as valuable as recommendations.

Recommendations

Although recommendations are optional, they provide you with the perfect opportunity to get valuable third-party testimonials. A recommendation is a comment written by a LinkedIn member about you. On your profile page, scroll down to where it says **Ask to be recommended**. Pick the person you want to ask and send them a nice request (a professor or work supervisor is a good person to ask).

Other Sections

In the top right corner of your profile, click **Add new profile section** and add as many as possible: Education, Volunteer Experience, Certifications, Projects and Courses.



MOST IMPORTANT: Let Recruiters Know You're for Hire!

Click **Jobs** on the top navigation bar. Click **Update career interests**. Turn the button to ON that says **Let recruiters know you're open**.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH LINKEDIN?

Now that you have a great looking profile, it's time to start building your network. You want to do this in a thoughtful way, one good contact after another.

Build Your Network - Make Connections

You already know a lot of people, so start with them! Friends, co-workers, family members, supervisors, professors, pastors, and other professionals you may have met at Mannahouse or your home church, can be great connections. When searching for specific individuals, simply type his or her name into the search bar at the top of any page.

1. Hit **Connect** and you will be asked whether you want to **Add a note** or **Send now**.
2. Choose **Add a note** and write a short, personalized one.

Sample Message: Hi Joe, it was nice meeting you at the Live Love event last week. I'm impressed with the work you're doing at Adidas, and would like to add you to my network on LinkedIn. Thank you! Martha Pitts

Respond to Invitations

Once you join LinkedIn you'll start receiving connection invitations. You don't have to say yes to everyone. Consider accepting invitations only from people you know or from PBC students or alumni. The choice is yours as to how you want to build your network.

Use Your Network

Your connections have a lot of wisdom and want to help, but remember that networking is a two-way street. Be someone who not only asks for advice, but who is willing to help, too. *One of the best ways to use your network is to ask for informational interviews where you learn about a person's career journey, their work and their employers. Informational interviews are the job seeker's secret weapon.*

Be Known

Sharing updates on LinkedIn is almost like Facebook, but it's not at all personal. Instead, you want to post about interesting things you've learned about your industry, articles you think are worthwhile, news of conferences you're attending, etc.

Click **Home** in the upper left corner and share your update in the box. Updates appear directly in the news feeds of your connections and show you are an engaged young professional.



Research Companies and Organizations

Whether you're preparing for a job search or an interview, LinkedIn is a terrific place to research companies and organizations. Just type in the name of the company or organization in the search box. Click the **Companies** tab at the top. Then click the company name. Once on the company's page, you can find invaluable career-related information, including:

- News of new projects, innovations, products, and new hires.
- Job openings.
- Career information about what it's like to work there.
- A list of your LinkedIn connections to company employees.
- Insider information about the company.

Find Open Job and Internship Positions

1. Click **Jobs** in the top navigation bar.
2. Use the filters at the top to narrow your search. (For internships, use the **Experience Level** tab.)

Join and Engage with Groups

Joining and participating in groups is a great way to get on the fast-track with LinkedIn. The purpose of LinkedIn groups is the same as that of any other groups - to get people together who share a common bond or goal, and to create an opportunity for them to communicate with each other. **Find Groups** - A great way to find groups is to look at the profiles of people who are doing what you want to be doing, and scroll down to the bottom of their profiles to see what groups they belong to - then join those! You can also use the search box and put in information that is specific to your industry, your job function, or your geographic location. One group you should definitely join is the **PBC Alumni Group**.

After joining a group, then what?

1. Jump into group discussions. Be a thoughtful contributor. Ask good questions.
2. Start your own discussion thread by asking a question or sharing an article that's relevant to the group.
3. Look at jobs that have been specifically posted to the group.
4. Contact fellow group members. Click near the **Members** section to see a list of members. You can send a message right from there. Feel free to ask them specific questions related to their career path and expertise.
5. Send connection invitations to members in your group you want to have in your network.

