

Wellington Careers and Employment

Career Essentials—Introduction to LinkedIn

LinkedIn is your online CV available 24 hours a day, and a lot more. It has become an essential tool in the professional world and the first thing you want people to find if they google you. Yes, it's your profile, but it's also an expression of your personal brand. To a potential employer, it's who you are, and 90 percent of them are using LinkedIn for recruiting purposes.

What is LinkedIn good for?

LinkedIn is the leading online professional network worldwide, and allows you to:



- showcase your experience, abilities, and educational achievements to many people,
- manage what employers know about you and what you can do for them,
- discover and connect with key contacts from companies you may want to work for,
- find internships and full-time jobs,
- build your professional brand and market yourself
- turn professional relationships into work opportunities, and
- research staff at companies to prepare for an interview.

Essential content

For an appealing and effective LinkedIn profile:

- **A suitable photo** is a must. Profiles with a photo get 14 times more views than those without. Get a quality photo of you alone (sorry, no cats), professionally dressed, with head and shoulders only, your best smile, and a clean background.
- **An informative and accurate headline** will be the first thing everybody reads and the one thing you want the reader to know about you. It needs to be brief, memorable, accurate, and relevant to the job you want. You can get a lot of information into 120 characters.
 - More than one 'title' is OK (e.g., "Aspiring marketing professional / Customer service representative / Seeking employment"). No need to use the word "student".
 - Say what you've been doing lately that you enjoy (e.g., "Engineering graduate building an exciting new gaming platform"). Try to avoid cheesy clichés like "Code ninja".



- Look for headline ideas on LinkedIn’s alumni tool. The tool allows you to search a range of useful information such as where fellow graduates work and which professions they are in.
- **Your ‘about’ (summary) section** needs to be a positive, concise, and engaging ‘story’ that captures the attention of the reader. This can include what you do, what motivates you, a couple of significant achievements, one of your goals, your skills, and what makes you unique. Be clear and confident about what you’re offering a future employer and try to include a few keywords from the industry.
- **The experience** section needs to state your job titles, what you achieved in each role, and what you were responsible for. Use a variety of strong promotional verbs to convey your capability to the reader. You can even add recent samples of work you’re proud of, including photos if appropriate. Volunteer roles can be part of this section, or in a separate section if you wish.
- **The education** section should have the full name of your degree (even if you haven’t finished it yet) and include dates, your major(s), and other relevant achievements (e.g., a Dean’s List award or study abroad experience completed during your degree).
- Try to complete as much information as possible in sections entitled Skills, Honours and awards, Volunteering, Licences and certifications, Organisations, Interests, Languages, and Causes.

Making connections

- Once you have completed your initial content and made it public, you can start requesting connections, which will initially be those with whom you have a personal or professional relationship.
- Start with classmates and lecturers, as well as colleagues and employers at internships and jobs. Add new connections as you meet people at employer networking events.
- Customise each connection request with a friendly reference to how you met or know them.

Recommendations, endorsements and groups

- A recommendation is a written statement from a LinkedIn connection. If you have worked with them previously, write a recommendation for them, and then request one in return. This is where your LinkedIn profile differs from your CV.
- A skill endorsement is a one-click way for your connections to confirm the skills you list on your profile. You can include up to 50 skills. As your network endorses your skills, return the favour for them.
- You can join up to 50 groups of interest on LinkedIn. You can also search for and join relevant professional associations, some of which you need to request permission to join.

Knowledge sharing and writing

- Posting or re-posting an article relevant to your field is simple and, together with a brief comment, is something that will show up on the home page of all your connections.
- Like or comment on updates that you read from within (and beyond) your network.
- Write and post your own articles on a regular basis and interact with the comments you receive.

