

University of Montana

LinkedIn Profiles

WHAT IS LINKEDIN?

LinkedIn is an online platform to house your professional accomplishments. It is also an online networking platform you can use to connect with people in your chosen field, potential employers, and target organizations/companies. A large percentage of recruiters use LinkedIn to find candidates and LinkedIn statistics suggest 3 people are recruited every minute on the platform, so it is an excellent way to build your professional network, find jobs, and invest in your career.

WHY USE LINKEDIN?

When you create a LinkedIn Profile, it is the first thing that pops up when someone searches your name on Google. By creating a profile, you are cultivating your professional identity and communicating your professional brand to the world of work. You express your professional brand by articulating your value, what you bring to the field, and your skills, which can help you get found and hired in your desired profession.

SEO = SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Search engine optimization is the process of increasing your chances of being found. Recruiters find people for roles on LinkedIn using SEO keyword searches. You can increase your odds of being found by including keywords from your industry in various areas of your profile. On the backend, **LinkedIn pulls keywords from your headline, job titles, and skills sections first**, so ELCS coaches always suggest using your industry's keywords in those areas whenever possible.

| TRUTHS | MYTHS |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most professions/majors can benefit from LinkedIn.• LinkedIn is one of the top job search platforms.• More detail is better, especially when easy applying.• Privacy features make it easy to control visibility.• LinkedIn is a networking and job search platform. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only business professionals/students use LinkedIn.• You can't find jobs on LinkedIn.• A basic profile is enough to get noticed on LinkedIn.• You can't control who sees what on LinkedIn.• LinkedIn is just a social media platform. |

| DOS | DON'TS |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write to your future and make LinkedIn content about your skills and value.• Share experiences and how they relate to your field.• Write in first-person (e.g. I accomplished)• Keep your content professional.• Connect with people and companies in your industry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on the past and make LinkedIn content about your current company/university.• Focus on being a student in key content sections.• Write in third-person (e.g. Jane accomplished)• Share religion, family or marital status, etc.• Connect before your profile is built out. |

LINKEDIN PROFILE ADD-ONS

Open to Work

You can share that you are “open to work,” and recruiters on LinkedIn can see this. There are some pros and cons to broadcasting this. For example, it makes it easy for recruiters to find you; however, if you are using LinkedIn to network and tap into the hidden job market, you might get fewer responses from professionals who think you’re only reaching out to get a job from them. It’s also important to keep in mind that if you are connected to your current employer or colleagues, they will see you as “open to work.”

LinkedIn URL

You can customize your LinkedIn URL (using between 5-30 characters) and it should be your first and last name so you can put it on your resume with ease. To change your URL, sign in to your profile. On the top right click “Edit Public Profile & URL,” and follow the directions given.

LINKEDIN PROFILE BREAKDOWN

Banner Image

Your LinkedIn banner, located at the top of your profile, should be changed from the generic blue-green banner to something that makes sense for your field. You can find free images on websites, like Unsplash, or you can make a personalized banner using a free Canva account.

LinkedIn Profile Picture

LinkedIn profiles that have professional profile pictures get 26x more views and 36x more messages than profiles without a picture. A professional headshot is not necessary; a selfie is acceptable as long as you follow these guidelines: include a neutral background (e.g. a white wall), only include yourself in the photo, smile and dress professionally (e.g. plain-colored or collared shirt).

Name

Your name is your name, but if you have any certificates or an advanced degree (e.g., master’s or doctorate degree), you can add them to your last name to increase your credibility on LinkedIn (e.g., Jane Fonda, M.A.).

Headline (220 Character Limit)

Your LinkedIn Headline, located below your name, is one of the first things recruiters see when they preview your profile and one of the first to be pulled for keyword searches. Communicate the value you bring to a new employer and industry (*why should they be interested in you?*) by including keyword skills you can offer.

Example: Role/Job Title | Specializing in [keyword] and [keyword] → Fostering [keyword-rich statement].

**Tip: not sure what keywords to use? Try searching for industry leaders and professionals in your field to see the keywords they use in their profiles. Remember, you are writing to your future!*

Featured

This section can be used to add posts, newsletters, articles, websites, or media to your LinkedIn profile to increase credibility and showcase your professional brand. For example, you could upload digital art, certifications relevant to your field, or publications.

About (2600 Character Limit)

This is where you can highlight your personality a bit more. It should be written in 1st person and describe the experience, skills, and value you bring to your field. Keep this in the professional realm, but not overly stuffy. You can set up this section in the following order, but know there is no one size fits all:

What I Do

A short introduction can be a good way to start off. Then, you can add your current position/internship if it is related to your field. You can also highlight skills related to your field to demonstrate how you contribute and bring value to your industry.

My Background

This is where you can describe any past experiences you want the professional world to know about from your experience section. You can share your major and other relevant experience as it relates to roles you are interested in (e.g., volunteer, internship, research experience)

Where I Want to Go

This is a good place to discuss the type of work environment you are interested in while you are searching for a role. You might also talk about positions or industries of interest as well. This section might be deleted, changed, or replaced once you are in a professional role you are happy with.

Call to Action / Contact Information

If you'd like, you could use this section to encourage your LinkedIn connections to reach out to you. Share a professional email address to make it easier for recruiters and connections who are looking to network to contact you, but this is not required if you are concerned about privacy—connections can always LI message you.

Experience (2000 Character Limit Per Experience)

This section overlaps with your résumé. Add titles from current/past roles, share accomplishments, responsibilities, and highlight skills gained. Remember, for SEO purposes, it's good to include keywords in your job titles when possible, as this section is one of the first pulled sections in keyword searches. You can begin bullet-point accomplishment statements with "I" and add in articles (the/an) because you are not limited by space like you are on a résumé.

**Remember, you can treat internships as professional experience if they are relevant to your field!*

Education (1000 Character Limit)

Sharing your educational background is an important part of your profile, as it highlights the work you've put into your professional advancement and skills you gained. Remember to add graduation dates to your education. Recruiters sometimes search LinkedIn using graduation date ranges to find talent; if you eliminate dates, you could be missed! Consider beefing up your education section by including a short paragraph describing your accomplishments, clubs, campus organizations, activities, etc. if relevant to your field!

Licenses & Certifications

If you earned certifications or licenses in something related to your industry (e.g. CPA, Teaching License, etc.), adding them to your profile can highlight your dedication to the field and show potential employers you have the skills they need. Add it to your profile for increased credibility and make recruiters' lives easier by displaying these accolades along with dates they need to be renewed (if relevant).

Skills (50 Skill Limit)

This is another top section that is pulled in keyword searches to find talent, so adding relevant skills that you have expertise in can help you be found. Once you start adding skills, LinkedIn will recommend more. Adding the skills that LinkedIn already has prepopulated in the system (not creating new ones) will also ensure your profile gets attention.

**Tip: make sure your top 3 pinned skills are highly relevant to your field and represent your top strengths.*

Recommendations

You can request recommendations from clients, colleagues, supervisors, and other professionals you've worked closely with to increase your credibility. This is not necessary but can be especially helpful if you provide a service that would benefit from testimonies and recommendations (e.g., private coaching or training).

Courses

Did you take courses related to your industry, but lack relevant professional experience? Add relevant courses to your LinkedIn profile and provide information about what skills and topics you learned in those courses to show recruiters you have the necessary knowledge for a future role in your industry. This section is not pulled from as frequently by recruiters, but it can still be helpful, especially if you haven't quite built up a lot of experience in your field.

Honors & Awards

Are you an honors student? Did you make the dean's list? Did you receive an award or scholarship? You can share these accomplishments with the LinkedIn community as well. This section is especially useful when applying to graduate school or your first professional role out of college.

Organizations

Consider adding professional associations you are or have been connected to in this section. Be sure to only include memberships and affiliations that are relevant to your field of interest. Recruiters trust professional associations and membership can indicate you're staying abreast of current trends in your industry.

UTILIZING AI FOR LINKEDIN

Artificial intelligence is a remarkable tool. It equips your computer to analyze data, offer predictions, and expedite decisions when extra support is needed.

However, despite AI's intelligence, it sometimes falters in matters of common sense and context. While it excels at producing impressive data, its efficiency is lacking in data-sparse environments. Additionally, AI can display potential bias and limited creativity. As we dive into the landscape of AI integration, we must also consider the concerns of privacy, security and the unforeseen consequences of using this tool.

PROS OF USING CHATGPT FOR LINKEDIN:

- **Efficiency:** ChatGPT can help you draft and edit LinkedIn messages and connection requests, saving you time and effort.
- **Networking:** ChatGPT can be used to help you discover which companies to follow, suggest personalized conversation starters with professionals, and help initiate meaningful conversation.
- **Resume and Profile Writing:** ChatGPT can help you refine your profile, including your headline, summary, and work experience descriptions, and showcase your expertise, making your profile more appealing.

CONS OF USING CHATGPT FOR LINKEDIN

- **Lack of Authenticity:** Using ChatGPT might result in messages that lack your personal touch.
- **Unpredictable Output:** ChatGPT can produce varying outputs, leading to unexpected or inappropriate content.
- **Overreliance:** Depending too heavily on ChatGPT could hinder your writing skills and ability to communicate effectively.

Keep in mind, your results will only be as good as the quality of the information you feed it, and the extent to which you edit the information using your own writing style, creativity, and sound judgment.

STRATEGIES & PROMPTS FOR GETTING BEST RESULTS

Apply the 60/40 Rule: Begin by crafting your content on your own, focusing on the key points you want to convey. Allocate 60% of the effort to your initial writing.

Content Generation: After writing, input your content into ChatGPT and ask it to rewrite and enhance your material. Prompt it to add specific examples, quantify achievements, improve language, etc.

Review and Polish: Review the generated text, make necessary edits, and ensure it aligns with your personal style and voice. Add any finishing touches, ensuring a well-polished final version.

LinkedIn Prompts:

- Can you help me draft a captivating headline for my LinkedIn profile that reflects my expertise?
- Create an attention-grabbing summary that showcases my skills and experiences.
- Suggest ways to describe my current role in an impactful manner.
- Help highlight my key achievements in past positions.
- What are some skills that are highly relevant in my industry? Can you suggest more for me to consider?
- How can I encourage more endorsements for specific skills on my profile?
- Can you help me describe my educational background in a way that emphasizes its relevance to my career?
- Provide suggestions to showcase my certification effectively.
- Concisely highlight my accomplishments.
- How can I politely request recommendations from colleagues and supervisors?
- Can you suggest personalized messages for connecting with industry professionals in a meaningful way?
- What kind of photo is best suited for a professional platform like LinkedIn?
- How can I infuse my LinkedIn profile with my unique personality while maintaining a professional tone?

ADDITIONAL LINKEDIN CONSIDERATIONS

Easy Apply

Easy Apply can require a résumé, but it also shares your LinkedIn profile with recruiters and hiring managers. If you are going to apply to jobs using this method, it is important to make sure your LinkedIn profile is up to date, as this is what they will use for screening purposes. ELCS coaches encourage clients to also submit a cover letter when the option is given, as recruiters indicate a preference for them, even when not required.

Personalized Look/Content

Do you want to add bolded headers to your LinkedIn profile? Use yaytext.com – write out the statement or header you'd like to use, and copy-paste your preferred text from the menu of options. Do you want to add symbols (e.g., arrows, dots/bullet-points, squares, etc.) to your profile? Use coolsymbol.com to copy-paste your symbol of choice. ELCS coaches discourage the use of many different types of symbols, as this can be distracting. Choose 1-2 to incorporate.

#HireGriz

Follow #HireGriz for job and internship opportunities shared by ELCS staff. We focus our posts on UM students and alumni who are seeking new opportunities.



As you begin to create your LinkedIn profile, check out the following learning journeys for more on networking and personal branding for your career:

- [Networking Tools](#)
- [Personal Branding Basics](#)