



# IUPUC OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

INDIANA UNIVERSITY-PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
COLUMBUS

## Using LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional networking site that can be used to help you connect with alumni and other professionals in the organizations and industries that relate to your career interests. LinkedIn is often referred to as the professional Facebook. LinkedIn is a place to share interests, find job opportunities, ask questions, research organizations, and network with professionals and alumni from a wide range of industries and geographic locations. In fact, there are over 100,000 Indiana University alumni with profiles on LinkedIn!



You can utilize LinkedIn to do all of the following:

- Build your professional network (an essential aspect of any successful job search)
- Conduct research on organizations and industries of interest to you
- Locate job opportunities
- Create a personalized, professional brand

## Getting Started with LinkedIn

### 1. Create Your LinkedIn Profile

Your profile should highlight the knowledge and skills you have developed that relate to your interests and career goals. It should only include professional information relevant to your internship or job search. Be sure to avoid personal information such as the year you were born, your address, and your marital status. Before you add information to your own profile, spend some time looking at the profiles of other professionals in your field of interest to get a feel for what is expected in your particular industry.

#### Professional Headline

Along with your name, this is the first thing others will see when they view your profile. This can be your job title or it can be a summary of your professional identity. If you are in the middle of a job or internship search you should use a short phrase that highlights your career objective along with your skills, experiences, and interests.

Example: *Recent Sport Marketing and Management graduate with experience creating social media and marketing campaigns for professional sports teams.*

#### Photo

This is the first image a potential employer or alumnus will see of you. Therefore, your photo needs to project a mature and professional image. Take a photo in which you are wearing business professional attire (see professional attire handout). Do not use a photo from another social networking site. Avoid photos that were taken at social events or where someone else has been cropped from the picture. The background should also be pleasing, professional, and not distracting.

#### Summary

The summary section should outline your key skills and experiences that are relevant to your career field of interest. The summary could include any of these elements: extracurricular activities, professional strengths/accomplishments, leadership experiences, community involvement, professional interests, and relevant internship/work experiences.

Example: *Strong background in sports promotional writing and editing with experience as a reporter for a regional newspaper. Public relations and marketing internship experience with a*

*professional sports team where both print and social media were utilized. Interested in career opportunities in sports related public relations, marketing, or promotional settings.*

### **Education**

Include the institution that you will be receiving a degree from/have received a degree from, your major(s), minor(s), and concentration(s). You may also want to include any honors or awards you received here. Additionally, feel free to highlight any relevant courses, papers, projects, etc. You do not want to include your GPA on your LinkedIn profile.

### **Experience**

Include a list of your experiences that are relevant to the career you are seeking. Avoid putting everything you have ever done onto your LinkedIn profile. This section might include work experience, internship experience, volunteer experience, and/or extracurricular experience. Under each experience, give a brief description of what you accomplished. There are two options when it comes to how to describe each of your experiences. (1) You can list your bullet points right from your resume. (LinkedIn even offers a resume upload feature to help with this.) (2) You can briefly describe your experience in a few short sentences that focus on your skills and accomplishments.

### **Additional Sections**

There are many other sections that LinkedIn allows you to add to your profile such as skills and recommendations. These are two of the best sections you can add to a profile. The more skills you add to the skills section, the more you brand yourself and allow your profile to be found in keyword searches. View other professionals' profiles to see what skills they choose to highlight based on your field of interest. Recommendations are also a crucial tool on LinkedIn. Your goal should be to have one recommendation for every position that you have held. When requesting recommendations of other individuals, be sure to write personalized messages instead of using the generic message that LinkedIn will send as a default. You also want to be sure that you are asking the right people for recommendations. Ask yourself if the person can really speak to your abilities or not. Avoid asking people for recommendations for the sake of having recommendations. You want each recommendation to add value to your LinkedIn profile. Be prepared to write recommendations for others as well.

**\*\*Once you have completed your profile, preview it as a PDF. This is how most employers will view your profile. If you still have questions about your profile, or want someone to critique it, make an appointment with a career advisor.\*\***

## **2. Join Groups**

Joining groups is a quick way to connect with a large number of individuals. Groups allow you to discover new people to connect with, learn about current issues and trends in specific career fields, and provide you with access to job listings that are only posted within LinkedIn groups. Start by joining an Indiana University group. Below are a number of groups that might be of interest to you:

**IUPUC**  
**Alumni Relations at IUPUC**  
**Business @ IUPUC**  
**Indiana University Alumni Network**  
**Columbus Young Professionals (CYP) Indiana**  
**Columbus, Indiana Professional Networking**  
**Cummins Inc.**  
**Faurecia**

To find additional groups to join, conduct group searches for industry and career fields of interest, student groups and professional organization, and/or other interests you have. Under the groups tab at the top of the webpage you will also find an option for "groups you may like".

### **3. Make Connections**

The more people you have in your network, the easier it is to connect to others in a variety of career fields, locations, and organizations. Start by connecting only with people you already know. You can search directly for people or scroll through LinkedIn's suggestions for people you may know. When you ask to connect with anyone it is always wise to write an individualized message. Do not just send the generic message that LinkedIn offers as a default.

To connect with people you may not know, you can request a connection through a group. When making these connections it is imperative that you write an introductory message explaining who you are, how you found them (the group you share membership in), and why you would like to connect with them. Additionally, you can request introductions. This is perhaps one of the most powerful aspects of LinkedIn. For example, let's say you find that John Smith has your ideal job and you would love to request an informational interview with him. You should start by seeing if you are already connected to someone who knows John. When you look at John's profile, over to the right you should see a link that says "Get introduced through a connection". This link means that you know someone who knows John and by clicking that link you can request an introduction to John.

## **Other LinkedIn Tools**

### **Company Research**

If you would like to use LinkedIn to get the most up-to-date information about who is working at what organizations, use the Company Search tool. The tool can be accessed from the top tab menu: select "Companies" and then "Search Companies". From here you can conduct both broad and narrow searches to help you find the information you are looking for.

### **Alumni Research**

LinkedIn has also made it easier to find alumni in specific geographic locations, industries, and organization. Go to: [www.linkedin.com/college/alumni](http://www.linkedin.com/college/alumni) and you will be able to sift through all of the Indiana University alumni currently on LinkedIn. This tool is fast and amazing when it comes to finding the perfect alumni member to connect with.

### **Job Postings**

Another exciting tool that can be found on LinkedIn is StudentJobs. The StudentJobs tool can be accessed here: <http://www.linkedin.com/studentjobs>. Use this tool to find job opportunities in a variety of industries. The tool can also be accessed via the tab menu at the top of the site: select "Jobs" and then "Students and Recent Grads".

### **Instructional Videos**

The following link will lead you to an instructional video prepared by LinkedIn on how to use the site to your advantage: <http://university.linkedin.com/career-services/resources>.